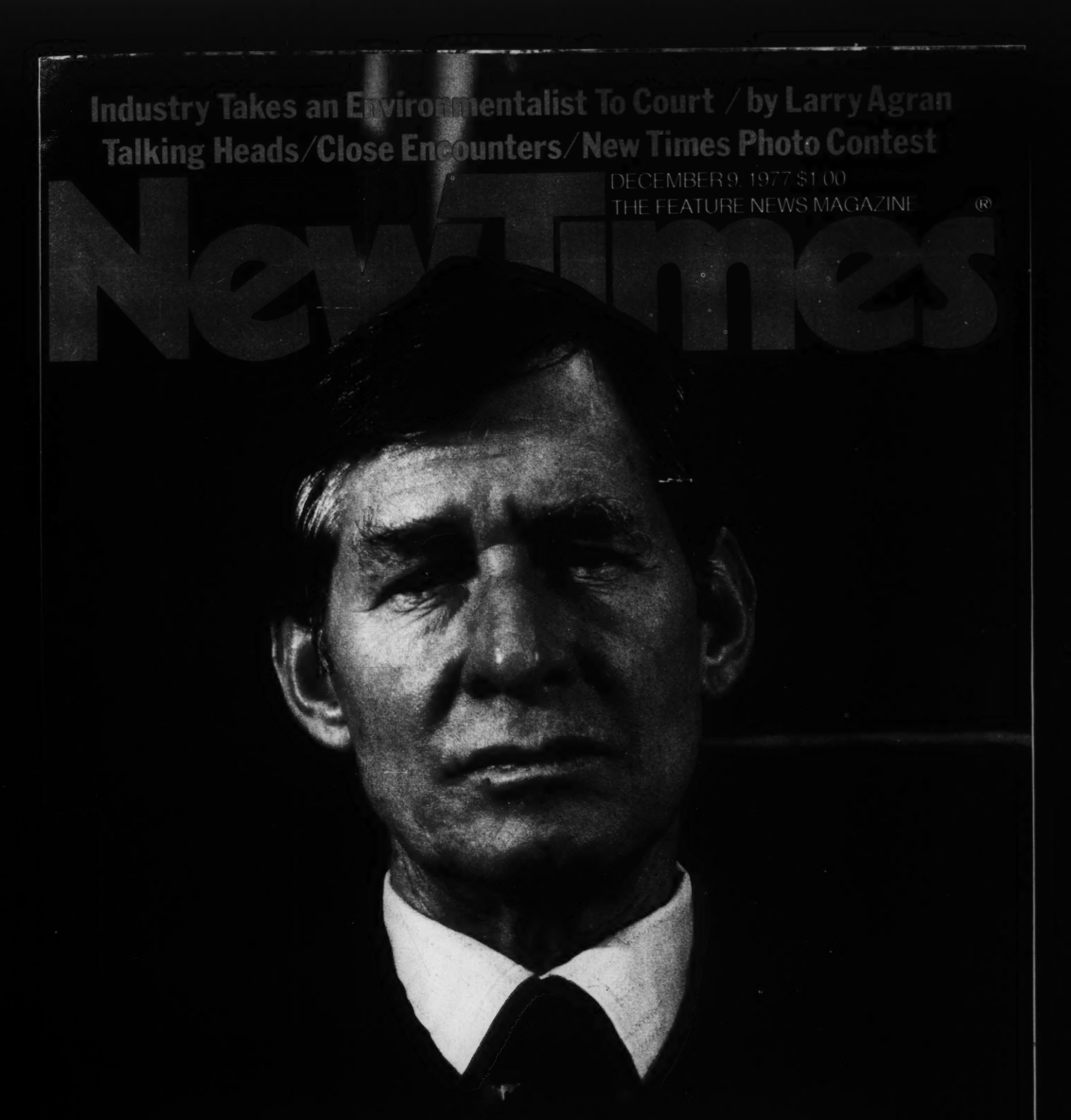
Industry Takes an Environmentalist To Court / by Larry Agran

Talking Heads/Close Encounters/New Times Photo Contest

DECEMBER 9, 1977 $1.00
THE FEATURE NEWS MAGAZINE

New Times®



HERE COMES THE JUDGE

Frank Johnson, an American Hero for the FBI

by Lawrence Wright

PATRICK REYNOLDS
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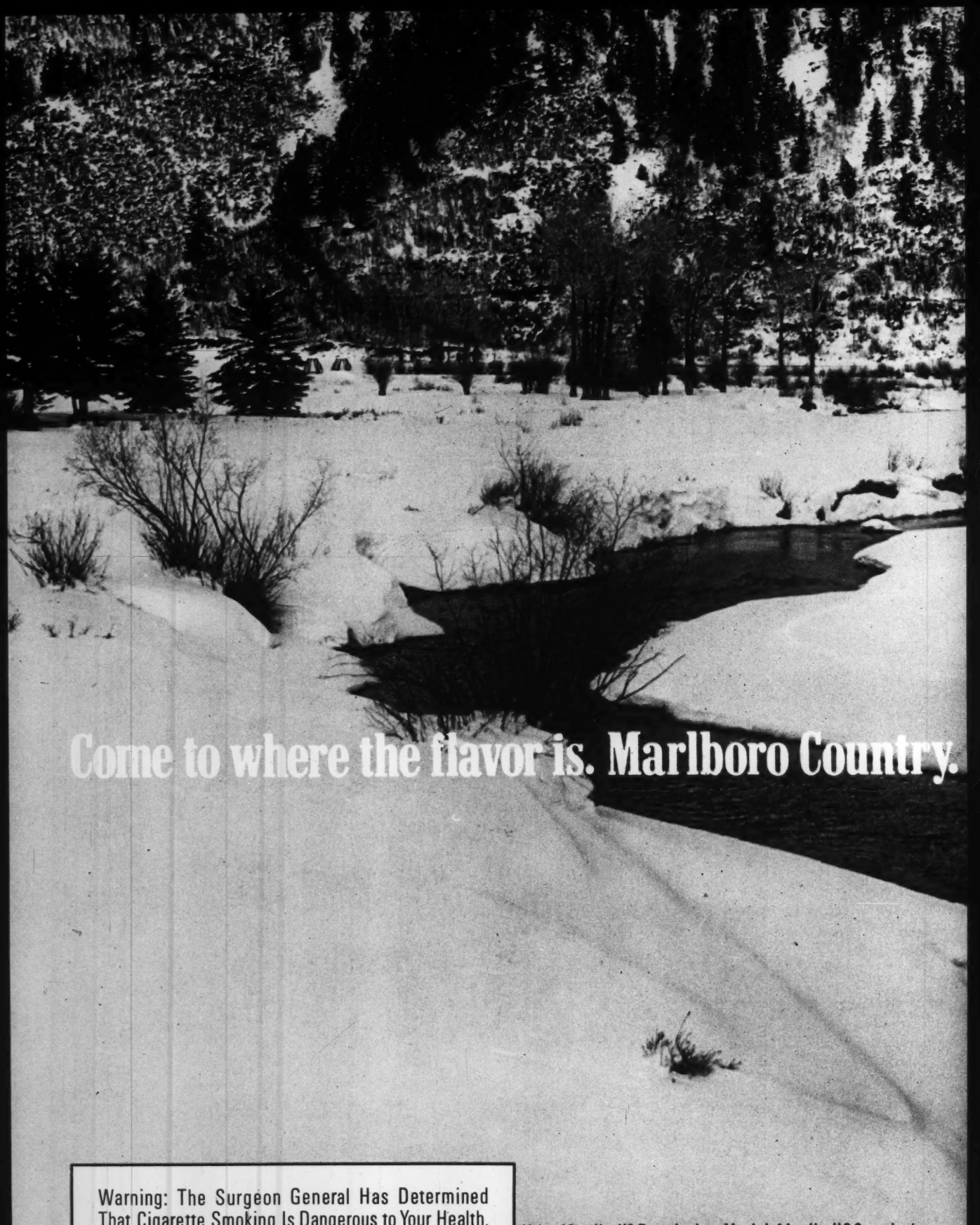

Warning: The Surgeon General Has Determined That Cigarette Smoking Is Dangerous to Your Health.

Lights: 12 mg "tar," 0.7 mg nicotine—Menthol: 14 mg "tar," 0.8 mg nicotine—Kings & 100's: 17 mg "tar," 1.0 mg nicotine av. per cigarette, FTC Report Aug. '77

New Times

DECENBER 9, 1977
VOLUME 9, NUMBER 12

Atticus Finch Goes to Washington

Judge Frank Johnson has a passion for justice that made him the most hated white man in Alabama during the civil rights struggles of the sixties. With his confirmation as director of the FBI imminent, Johnson remains a controversial figure. But one thing is certain—J. Edgar Hoover he ain't.

By Lawrence Wright
Page 30

We Got Sunsets

After weeding out the out-of-focus pictures of bikinied girl friends, and eliminating the "Here we are at Niagara Falls" snapshots, we now present the winners of the first annual New Times Photo Contest.

Page 51

Death Valley Days

In 1967, Dr. Peter Capurro moved to Little Elk Valley, Maryland, to escape the hazards of industrial pollution. So imagine his dismay when he discovered a chemical plant—and a cancer epidemic—right in the middle of his "little Shangri-La." Capurro's efforts to expose Galaxy Chemical, Inc. have made him the defendant in an unusual "defamation" suit that goes to trial this week.

By Larry Agran
Page 56

COVER
PHOTOGRAPH BY DAVID BURNETT/CONTACT

The Fearsome Onesome

The meanest man in football is a 5'6", 240-pound lawyer who has N.F.L. club owners shaking in their Guccis. Howard Slusher's clients include some of the top players in the game, and he gets results by keeping them out of it.

By Mark Goodman
Page 68

Letters
Short and sour.
Page 6

Dollar Signs
An idea whose time has gone: grain subsidies.
By A. Gallatin
Page 9

Party Lines
Neo conservatives are claiming that sixties liberalism was a failure, but maybe it never had a chance.
By Robert Shrum
Page 15

Media
Harold Robbins, the king of pulp, is smuttier—and smarter—than his novels.
By Jane Perlez.
Page 18

The Insider
The Carter forces are working overtime to make Jerry Brown look bad, while murmurs of a Moynihan White House race surface in the East.
Page 21

REVIEWS

Movies
Close Encounters triumphs over its hype.
By Richard Corliss
Page 76

Music
Talking Heads are riding the crest of the New Wave.
By Patrick Carr
Page 81

Records
David Bowie, Donna Summer and Kraftwerk: machine rock.
By Jim Miller
Page 82

Books
Rape, murder and sodomy by saber make Jerzy Kosinski's *Blind Date* a rather depressing affair.
By Geoffrey Wolff
Page 86

Final Tribute
A fond farewell to the *American Review*
By Geoffrey Wolff
Page 88

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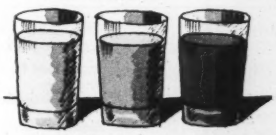
RUM REVELATIONS.

Surprising facts every rum drinker should know.

Ah, what rum drinkers don't know about rum. So Myers's thinks it's time to raise some eyebrows.

The first fact of rum. Rum comes in three shades: white, gold, and dark. Some light rums are blended to have a barely noticeable taste. Their flavor might fade in the drink. But Myers's is blended specially to be more flavorful. The Myers's comes through the mixer.



Another surprise. Dark rum isn't any stronger than light rum. Both are the same alcoholic proof. So Myers's isn't any stronger, even though it has a tastier rum flavor.

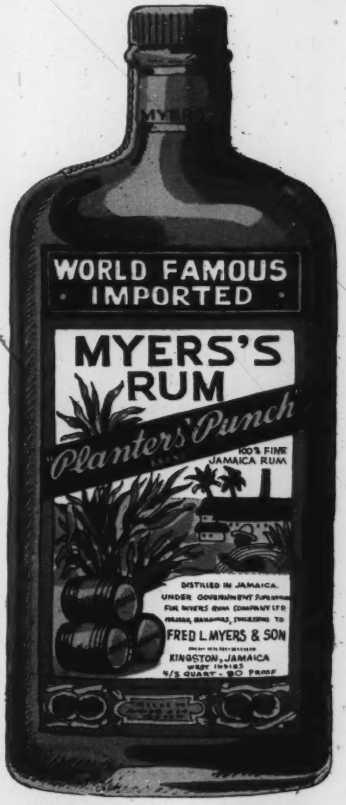
More revelations. Myers's is more expensive. It's imported from Jamaica where it's

made slowly, in small batches. The richer taste is worth the time. And the price.

Still another little known fact. Caribbean bartenders mix Myers's into exotic drinks made with lighter rums. They trust Myers's to enhance the flavor. So discover for yourself the dash that Myers's adds to a simple Rum & Cola. The

extra punch Myers's adds to a Planters' Punch. Here are the recipes for your pleasure.

Myers's Planters' Punch: Combine in shaker, 3 oz. orange juice, juice of ½ lemon or lime, 1½ oz. Myers's. Add 1 tsp. superfine sugar and dash of grenadine. Shake well and serve in tall glass filled with ice. Add orange slice, cherry.



Myers's Rum and Cola: Into a highball glass, add 1½ oz. Myers's Rum. Fill glass with cola beverage. Add slice of lemon or lime, and stir.

And finally, one last point. Dark rum is better to use in cooking than light rum. Myers's adds a fuller rum flavor to foods. Try sprinkling Myers's over grapefruit halves. It's a simple way

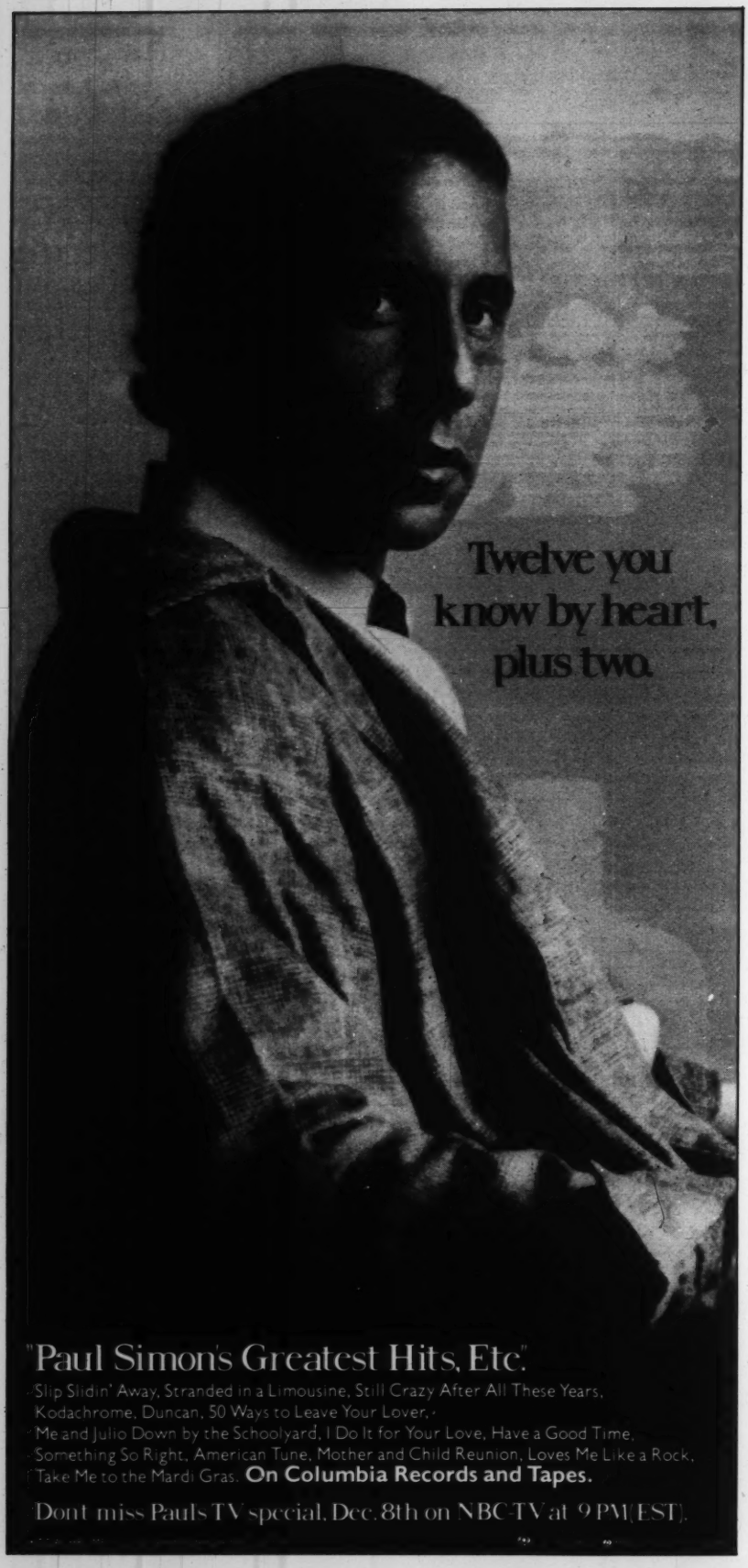
to create an interesting first course. Myers's makes so many rum recipes even more delicious.

So now that you know the facts, your choice should be clear: Myers's Rum.

Because if you like rum, it's time you discovered the pleasures that wait for you in the dark.

Next to Myers's All other Rums Seem Pale.

Imported by Seagram Distillers Co., 375 Park Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10022, 80 Proof.


Twelve you
know by heart,
plus two.
"Paul Simon's Greatest Hits, Etc."
Slip Slidin' Away, Stranded in a Limousine, Still Crazy After All These Years,
Kodachrome, Duncan, 50 Ways to Leave Your Lover,
Me and Julio Down by the Schoolyard, I Do It for Your Love, Have a Good Time,
Something So Right, American Tune, Mother and Child Reunion, Loves Me Like a Rock,
Take Me to the Mardi Gras. On Columbia Records and Tapes.
Don't miss Paul's TV special, Dec. 8th on NBC-TV at 9 PM (EST).

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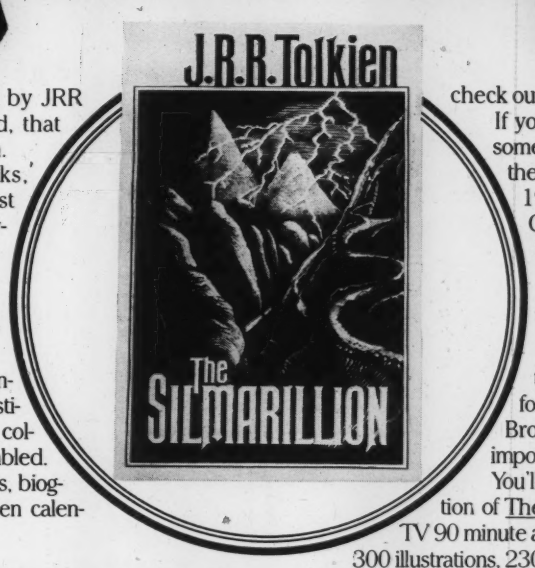
THE ENCHANTING WORLD OF J.R.R. TOLKIEN.



When a new book by JRR Tolkien is published, that calls for a celebration.

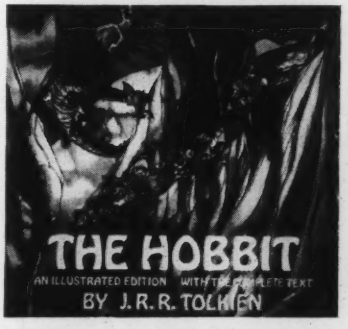
And Waldenbooks, the nation's largest bookseller, is having just that.

Recently, the book Tolkien worked on for 50 years and was revising at the time of his death was published.

And to mark the event, Waldenbooks is holding a special Tolkien Festival, offering the most comprehensive collection of Tolkien books ever assembled. Including special editions of his works, biographies, critical studies — even Tolkien calendars and posters.

The reason for the party.

When JRR Tolkien died, he left behind millions of devoted fans. He also left behind a final work, The Silmarillion, which was edited by his son, Christopher, and has now been published by Houghton Mifflin ($10.95).



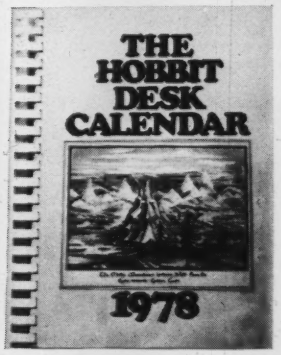
The Silmarillion is the work on which Lord of the Rings and all the Hobbit adventures are based. It is the account of the chaotic First Age, and it tells of epic struggles and betrayals which were to haunt later Ages, such as the theft of the Silmaril jewels and the war to get them back.

It also contains several shorter works, including "Of the Rings of Power," the connecting link to Lord of the Rings. The Silmarillion is both the cornerstone of Tolkien lore and the completion of the mythology which has captured our age. Finally, the chance to read new Tolkien!

When you come to Waldenbooks for your copy of The Silmarillion, you'll see a special Tolkien section with all sorts of new books and memorabilia you'll want to check out.

If you'd like to soak up some Tolkien every day of the year, you'll want the 1978 Hobbit Desk Calendar (Ballantine $6.95). With 12 of JRR Tolkien's own color illustrations, plenty of room for notes and a double page spread for every week. Or the best-selling calendar of all time, the Tolkien Wall Calendar. It's all-new for 1978, with color paintings by the Brothers Hildebrandt and the dates important to Middle Earth marked clearly.

You'll also find an enchanting new gift edition of The Hobbit. Based on this year's NBC TV 90 minute animated Thanksgiving special, it has 300 illustrations, 230 of them in color. This is an 11″x11″ art book containing Tolkien's complete text, specially priced at $29.95 (Abrams). Bilbo Baggins never looked better!



For collectors, there will be leather-bound editions of Lord of the Rings and The Hobbit. And for those who want to introduce Tolkien to a friend, deluxe boxed paperback sets of Lord of the Rings. Plus editions of his children's books and songs.

And since the world of JRR Tolkien wouldn't be complete without some of the books his works have inspired, you'll also find Humphrey Carpenter's fine new study, JRR Tolkien, a biography. And The Tolkien Companion by JEA Tyler (Avon $4.95), an exhaustive thesaurus of Tolkien names, terms and places, arranged and explained in alphabetical order. Great for heavy Tolkien addicts.

We could go on. But by now you've probably gathered it's going to be a heck of a party. In fact, you might say that since Lord of the Rings, the best thing to happen to Tolkien fans is now at Waldenbooks.

NOW AT WALDENBOOKS

There are over 425 Waldenbooks stores from coast to coast. Check the white pages for the one nearest you.

"Show some emotion
Put expression in your eyes
Light up
If you're feeling happy
But if it's bad
Then let the tears roll down"
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"Show Some Emotion"
This year's album from
Joan Armatrading
On A&M Records and Tapes
Produced by Glyn Johns
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Letters

Correcting Cancer

The editors of *New Times* regret that in Ruth Rosenbaum's November 25 article "Cancer, Inc." there were some statistical slip-ups, most of which occurred during the editing process:

Women under 50 made up 50 percent, not 85 percent, of the participants in the ACS/NCI breast screening project. Six months after strict guidelines were issued, 75 percent of women under 50 were still being x-rayed. The cancer research center at Fort Detrick in Maryland has received a total of $119 million since 1972, not $119 million a year. The cancer death rate for nonwhite males has increased at three times the rate of that for white males since 1950. The death rate itself is higher, but not 3 times higher. In one recent year, 40,000–60,000 women received DES for various reasons, not just to prevent miscarriages. (You also may have noticed that page 35 ends in the middle of the word "personnel." We found the "nel" a few days later on our art department floor.)

Dye-atribe

The Insider notes an Oxford study indicating that hair-dye users don't die of cancer any more frequently than non-dyers (November 11). The survey of a small sample of women for up to ten years can't be expected to tell us much about a disease with a latent period of two decades or more. And neither Clairol nor The Insider mentioned the study's conclusion: ". . . the fact that few known carcinogens give a negative result [on a test in which hair dyes are positive] obliges attention to any agents which are positive . . . and to which there is appreciable human exposure.

Arthur Lubow
New York City

Erratum

Due to a typesetter's error in a column that went to press early in this issue, there is an inaccuracy in the fourth paragraph of A. Gallatin's "Dollar Signs" on page 9. *One third of the produce from* the 340 million acres of U.S. farm land goes into export markets.

Photo pas

Our November 11 story, "Wild in the Stands," opened with a photograph of fans swarming Yankee Stadium's infield the night the Yanks clinched the 1976 American League pennant. The picture should have been credited to A.J. Levin/Black Star. Our apologies.

Look at these prices, Holmes.

Hmmmm. Now I understand why Ford and GM owners are being car-napped.

I was wondering, Holmes.

Yes, Watson.

What price would our Daimler Cabriolet fetch in exchange?

Poor Watson, you've been car-napped.

INTRODUCING A FIENDISHLY SEDUCTIVE FOUR-DOOR. THE 1978 DODGE DIPLOMAT.

PRICED AS SHOWN: $5195.*

1978 DODGE DIPLOMAT FOUR-DOOR	
Base price	$ 5147
Six-cylinder engine	Standard
Power front disc brakes	Standard
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Power steering	Standard
Transverse torsion-bar suspension	Standard
Vinyl roof	Standard
White sidewall radial tires	$ 48
Total	$ 5195*

The 1978 Dodge Diplomat four-door offers big-car value and comfort... in a manageable new size. And for one low price, you get a lot of beautiful car.

As you can see, most of the equipment that helps make a car a real value... is standard on the Diplomat. But some things have to be experienced to fully appreciate this car's value. Like Diplomat's outstanding driveability. And the overall performance of Diplomat's lively Super Six engine.† This power plant with a four-speed manual transmission† gives Diplomat EPA mileage estimates of 25 mpg highway and 17 mpg city. (Your mileage may vary according to your car's condition, its equipment, and your driving habits. California mileage lower.)

See your Dodge Dealer today and find out why more and more people are buying or leasing Dodge Diplomats.

*Sticker price as shown, not including taxes and destination charges. California price higher.

†In California, 225-1 six-cylinder engine standard and automatic transmission required at extra cost.

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Dollar Signs/By A. Gallatin

The Great Food Disaster

Are the experts ever right? Do you remember the forecasts issued by the "Club of Rome" during 1973–1975? The intellectually fashionable Rome "experts," among others, were predicting *permanent* food shortages, if not famine itself. When the soybean price reached $12 per bushel, even the American President pushed the panic button and embargoed the export of precious soybeans to the Japanese, who traditionally rely on them as their largest source of protein. Cassandras all over the world bewailed the end of agricultural abundance in America.

American agriculture responded to the food crisis of 1973–1975 by struggling to free itself from a generation of federal intervention. For 40 years, U.S. agriculture had labored in a straightjacket of government regulation, price control and bureaucratic red tape. Farmers since the mid-1930s had been told by the government what to grow, how much, and where. A Rube Goldberg system of taxpayer-financed subsidies, quotas, tariffs, and foreign-country food grants had provided American farmers the requisite financial incentives to do what the American consumer would not willingly pay the farmer to do—that is, *reduce* production and *raise* prices.

In the end, after much debate, most production controls were removed from the agricultural sector. President Ford's Secretary of Agriculture, Earl Butz, exhorted the American farmers to expand production under new market conditions. Free prices for farmers and the liberty to produce at will supplanted, overnight, the government regulators who had ruled American agriculture since the Great Depression. (Meanwhile, ever-tighter government controls were being imposed on the oil industry, so that the U.S. government met itself coming and going.)

Before one can evaluate the *results* of the new farm policy, one must consider a few facts about U.S. farming today. A mere 4 percent of the U.S. population produces all our farm products. There are only 2.8 million farmers, but they account for almost one-fifth of U.S. private business. Farmers will spend about $125 billion on production and consumption this year. Their collective assets exceed $600 billion in value. Their debts amount to over $100 billion. The production, processing and distribution of food and fiber accounts for 20 percent of the gross national product. Three hundred and forty million acres of U.S. farm land goes into export markets, earning the hard currency we use to pay for the necessities we bring in from abroad—including oil.

Since 1960, agriculture has contributed a *surplus* to the balance of U.S. trade, and that surplus has been growing steadily. Between 1973 and 1977 American farmers responded to the incentives of free prices and deregulation by demonstrating an astounding commitment to increased production: in 1972 total farmer debt outstanding was $56.9 billion. This debt represented the borrowed money used to buy land, equipment, tractors, storage and livestock. Five years later, in January 1977, total farmer debt had risen to $102 billion. The conservative U.S. farmer had borrowed $45 billion in just five years, half of all the debt he had ever accumulated, largely in order to supply food and fiber to meet unprecedented world demands.

During those years, U.S. corn production has expanded to over 6 billion bushels, one-quarter of which is now exported. Wheat yields rose to 2 billion bushels, *two-thirds* of which are now exported to bread-short and impoverished nations. Soybean production hit a record 1.6 billion bushels this year, a large part of which will go for export. Without such a successful record of exporting agricultural products, we would have been unable to expand and pay for our oil imports.

And what has happened during this period to the *prices* of these basic food commodities, which the pundits in 1973 believed would remain on permanently high plateaus? Today we are faced with a staggering glut of low-priced grain. Wholesale food prices have been stable or falling all year. The wheat price has fallen from over $6 at its peak to $2.35 in the cash market today. (The average production cost of a bushel of wheat is approximately $2.50.) Some farmers must sell wheat below production costs. The corn price has fallen from $4.50 at the peak to $2.20 in the cash market today. (Average production cost per bushel of corn: $3.00.) The soybean, our cheapest source of essential protein, selling a couple of years ago at the incredible level of $12 a bushel, has fallen to $5.50 a bushel, also approximating its cost of production. Because of its glut, more and more farmers are selling their produce at little or no profit. No wonder Laurence Bitner, a Georgia farmer and leader of a nationwide group of striking farmers, proclaimed in late October: "We're simply saying we won't buy and we won't sell or produce at a loss."

The farmer is now caught in the scissors of rising costs and falling prices for his products. Farm income has declined from $33 billion in 1973 to an estimated $20 billion in 1977, even as the

total farm debt has risen 55 percent. It doesn't require a calculator to realize that many farmers may go to the wall.

The truth is simple and embarrassing: the experts were plain wrong in 1973 and 1974. Far from the projected Malthusian shortages and food famines, we now face not only a worldwide glut, but even a potential depression in the farm belt. Our grain elevators groan under the burden of our spring wheat crop, harvested and stored when we had 1.1 billion bushels of wheat still in the grain elevators from the previous year's crop. Nor are surpluses of this magnitude unique to the U.S. All around the globe the producers of grain and soybeans expanded their output to meet the demand at higher prices. Brazil, India, Argentina, to mention only a few, have substantially amplified their exports while satisfying their domestic needs.

As if this unanticipated glut were not enough, it is disconcerting to learn that we are now faced with a reactionary government policy which may constitute an even greater threat to American working men and women. The Carter White House, incredibly enough, has opted for another round of tight government control. The Farm Act of 1977, signed into law in September, calls for the same discredited programs of farm acreage control, crop loan subsidies, and taxpayer-subsidized cash payments to farmers who were swept away by the twin devils of scarcity and high prices in the first place.

American agriculture, it seems, will be returned to the status of a government-regulated industry. Once again, the government will subsidize grain prices at levels higher than prevailing market prices. While farmers benefit,

Farm income has declined from $33 billion in '73 to $20 in '77, even as total farm debt has risen 55 percent. It doesn't require a calculator to realize that many farmers may go to the wall

working people and the middle class in the towns and cities will foot the bill. Not that we do not understand and sympathize with the farmer in his plight. But the farmer, on his own, knows how to reduce production much better than the government can force him to. What's more, a rational farmer is only likely to reduce production when prices are low, while he will continue to produce more than he otherwise would if the government continues to support grain prices at a level higher than the consumer will pay.

The problem is not the farmer. Nor is it the consumer, who is unwittingly ripped off by high food prices imposed by government policy. The problem is very simply hyperactive and unpredictable government farm policy.

In the long run, these new subsidies are neither good for the American farmer, nor are they affordable by an already overtaxed working and middle class. It is not too late to question the wisdom of President Carter's return to a government-controlled agriculture. If volatile government farm policies contributed to the catastrophic food price rises of 1973–1975, then the restoration of these same interventionist policies may lead to a new food catastrophe in the 1980s. The Food and Agriculture Act of 1977 will cost the taxpayer as much as $7.5–10 billion for price supports, loan programs, support services and research. Food stamps—another form of subsidizing the farmer and burning up the surplus—will cost at least $5.6 billion. Food grants abroad will add a couple billion more.

It is strange that we should restore to the U.S. government so large a hand in American agriculture when the U.S. Post Office charges more money to deliver a first-class letter from Illinois to New Orleans than an entrepreneurial river barge owner charges to deliver a 60-pound bushel of corn over the same distance. ●

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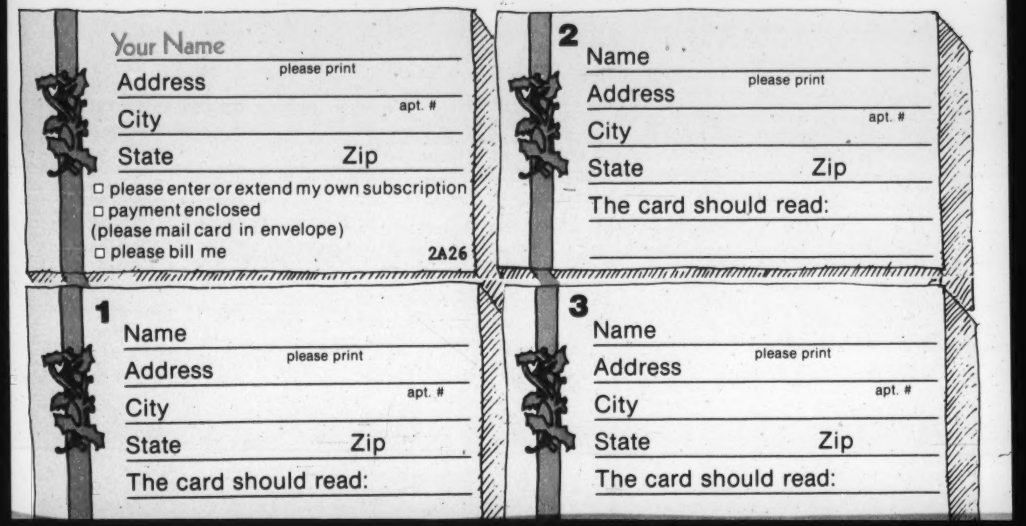

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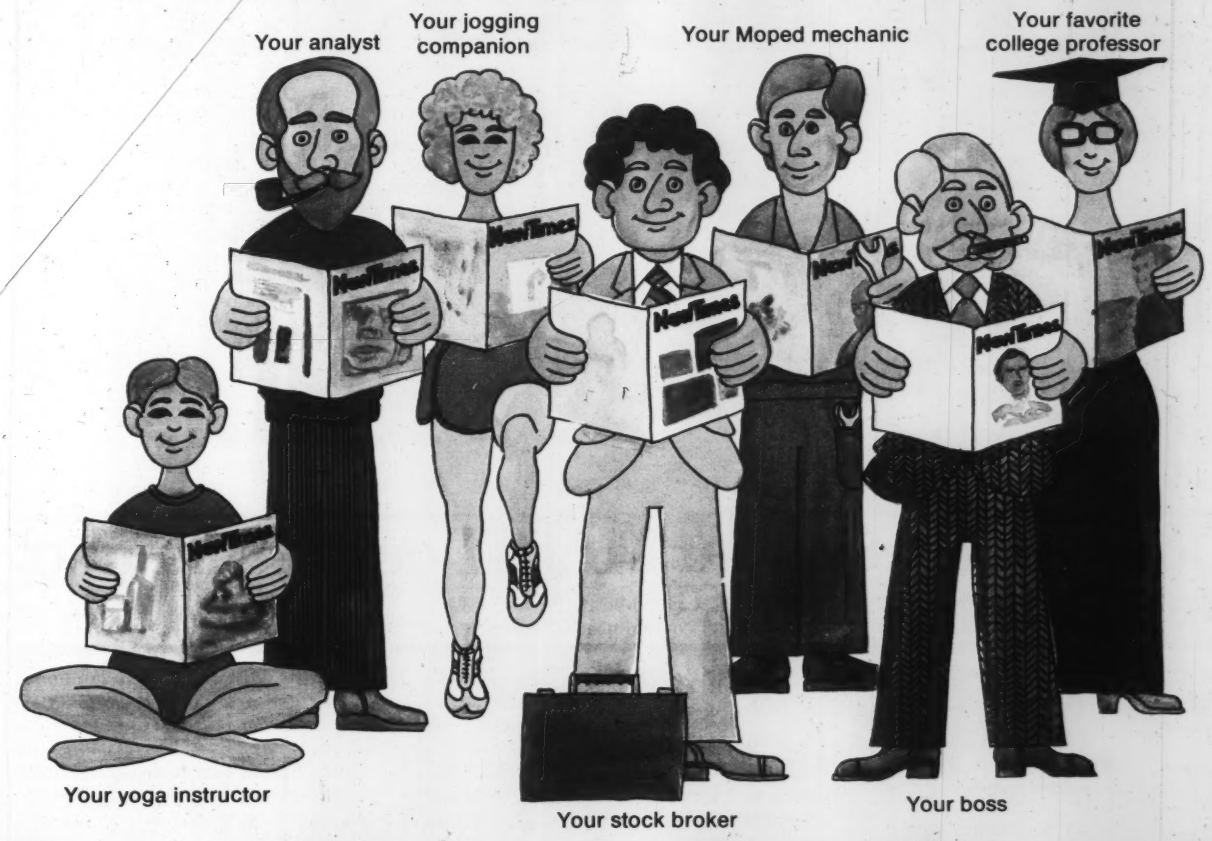

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Party Lines/by Robert Shrum

The Neoconservative Cop-out

"The future of liberalism was yesterday."

"The Great Society was tried, and failed, in the 1960s."

"You can't solve problems by throwing money at them."

"Less is more."

So goes the litany of the day. The media, *New Times* very much included, says America is turning right. Democratic politicians, sounding like Republicans, have been running for office by campaigning against government. "We must abolish and consolidate hundreds of obsolete and unnecessary federal programs and agencies," said Jimmy Carter in 1976. In New York, limousine liberal Ed Koch moved to the right—and into the mayor's office. In Washington, the Democratic Senate has been voting price incentives for oil companies instead of tax rebates for lower-income families. And in California, Jerry Brown bids for re-election as governor—and maybe for the presidency in 1980—as, in effect, "the real Jimmy Carter."

After every period of war or social activism in this century, the political pendulum has swung full arc toward the reaction of inaction; a weary nation has wanted to fight no new battles, at least not for awhile. In the past, that mood has inspired no special ideology: Americans simply felt they had earned a rest from international involvement or domestic reform. A drift toward isolationism and run-of-the-mill conservatism were sufficient to such political hours.

But this time, on the domestic front anyway, neoconservatism offers an entirely new conception of limited government based supposedly on empirical evidence. Its ideologues are a coterie of formerly liberal professors, for whom poverty programs never meant more than consulting contracts anyway. In their journals, *The Public Interest* and *Commentary*, academics such as Nathan Glazer, Irving Kristol, James Q. Wilson and Seymour Martin Lipset have "proved" the inherent inadequacy of liberalism; one of their number, Daniel Moynihan, now sounds the theme in the United States Senate. Their proof is the record of the sixties, those facts that "everybody" knows: despite the investment of many billions of dollars, poverty did not end, slums were not eradicated, bad schools got worse and crime rates increased. What the country couldn't do then, therefore, it certainly shouldn't try again.

PHOTOGRAPH BY DENNIS BRACK/BLACK STAR

Sargent Shriver: A one-man metaphor

There were warnings back then that the new social programs of the sixties were not being given a fair chance. Successively, Eugene McCarthy, Robert Kennedy and George McGovern campaigned for President on the grounds that the Vietnam war was not only wrong on its merits, but that by wasting scarce public resources, it undercut any hopes for a great society. Ironically, however, those who opposed the war then and who still want to give liberal policies the chance they never had, are now dismissed as impractical and impolitic, while the neoconservatives—the Kristols and Lipsets who scorned the peace movement—have become bearers of this season's conventional wisdom.

In fact, it really *was* the cost of the war, far more than any other factor, that for much of a decade slowed social progress in America. Between 1965 and 1970, military expenditures soared from $46 billion to $77 billion, an increase itself larger than the total expenditures for all new domestic programs. With calls for spending cutbacks coming from the Congress, Lyndon Johnson chose to sacrifice domestic priorities. "Just at the time when, under Johnson's original scenario," wrote his biographer, Doris Kearns, "the Great Society should have been entering its second phase—in which the good programs were to be expanded and the bad ones scuttled—the program administrators were told to tighten their belts and adopt a program of austerity. And Johnson the benefactor was forced to starve his own programs."

If the Great Society is the new conservatives' anti-liberal anthem, then the War on Poverty is its most damning stanza. Sargent Shriver, the first director of the poverty program (and before that of the Peace Corps), almost seems a one-man metaphor for the sixties. "When I ran for President last year," he recalls, "one problem I had was being identified with all the social activism, the do-gooding, of the Kennedy and Johnson years." Professor Allan Lichtman of American University notes that even students in his graduate history classes assume that the poverty program spent "about a hundred billion dollars," and to no avail. But as Shriver points out, "the maximum we ever got in one year was $2.1 billion"—the cost for three weeks of the Vietnam war at its peak. The difficulty with the War on Poverty, he told a Senate committee in 1975, was "not a maximum feasible misunderstanding," Moynihan's derisive verdict, "but a minimum financial effort."

Even with a relative pittance to spend, the poverty program achieved a measure of progress. Legal Services, for example, gave the poor for the first time some access to the courts, where their lawyers have won landmark decisions, such as ending the arbitrary repossession of products nearly paid off under installment plans. Referring to a list of poverty programs that included Head Start, Foster Grandparents and Neighborhood Health Centers, Labor Secretary Ray Marshall recently told Shriver: "No one seems to know it, but all these programs have been fantastic successes." Marshall noted that the Carter Administration was doubling the Job Corps. The War on Poverty also conducted the first pilot tests of the negative income tax, and the resulting research became a basis for both Nixon's Family Assistance Plan and Carter's welfare reform.

Shriver and his associates knew a decade ago that a war on poverty

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would remain only a rear-guard action until the Johnson Administration—or any other—was willing to pay for it, or at least make a substantial down payment. In 1966, Shriver submitted a proposal calling for an anti-poverty budget $21 billion higher in 1971 than in 1965. The plan included welfare reform. It warned that "current funding levels have provided [nothing] more than the necessary conditions for a beginning." LBJ, who had just pushed through a supplemental appropriation of $12 billion for Vietnam, rejected Shriver's recommendation out of hand. And two years later, White House aide Joseph Califano (now Secretary of Health, Education and Welfare) lobbied the Kerner Commission not to suggest any major new assistance to the cities.

The neoconservative analysis of the Great Society is half-right. It was indeed a case of overpromising—but the underperforming was primarily a matter of underfunding. "In the 1960s," says Shriver, "the federal government did throw a lot of money at problems — the problems of Vietnam."

The presumed failure of liberal government has an effect, and a purpose, beyond impending social progress. It tends to allow private, especially corporate interests, a freer hand. "Being anti-government may sound good," observes a Carter Administration adviser, "but government is often the only force powerful enough to protect the consumer from corporate abuse." The chemical companies, he notes, didn't volunteer to stop pouring poison into the rivers.

Neoconservatism neatly fits the business community's traditional strategy for both escaping and exploiting government authority. On the one hand, throughout American history, every losing enterprise from postal to rail service has been dumped on government. Then its failure to turn a profit, for example when running the passenger trains that went bankrupt in corporate hands, becomes irrefutable "evidence" of the government's inferior management skills. On the other hand, this anti-government thesis is *very* selective; the private sector doesn't pine to be too private. Perpetually, big business has not only welcomed, but strenuously lobbied for, public subsidies for itself. Federal land grants financed the railroads in the 19th century; in 1971 a federal loan rescued Lockheed from bankruptcy; this year tax subsidies to corporations will total $28 billion. In short, the welfare state is fine—so long as it means welfare for the rich.

In truth, then, liberalism, the kind the Kennedys, the McGoverns, the Udalls, the Galbraiths and the Black Caucus represent, hasn't failed; it's just never been tried. Its three fundamental goals over the last decade have collided directly with entrenched interests. The military-industrial complex, with defense contracts seeded in virtually every congressional district and the biggest bureaucracy of all in the Pentagon, has succeeded in blocking the first liberal goal, a shift of budget priorities to domestic programs; indeed, the Carter Administration, elected on a pledge to cut military spending,

"The maximum we ever got for the poverty program in one year," says Shriver, "equaled the cost of three weeks of the Vietnam War"

is preparing a $20 billion increase for next year. And the beneficiaries of tax loopholes, with their grip on Senate Finance Committee Chairman Russell Long, have stymied the second goal, a moderate redistribution of income and wealth; indeed, the relative distribution of national income has hardly changed since the New Deal—and now Jimmy Carter's "reform" of the tax system (a system he used to denounce as "a disgrace to the human race") has been watered down to a straight tax reduction and a simplification of the tax forms. And finally, corporate interests, with a free ride on the crest of the anti-government wave, are lobbying aside the third liberal goal, a redistribution of power. Thus, the overwhelmingly Democratic House wouldn't even vote on a bill to prevent consumer fraud.

It might be possible to take on such interests, but it's easier for most politicians, including many one-time liberals, to take the neoconservative cop-out. It means that a governor, or a senator, or a president, doesn't have to persuade his constituents to pay the price of social activism; nor does he or she have to offend powerful lobbies.

Neoconservatism permits Americans to satisfy their consciences and their selfishness, too. "If we can convince ourselves that we tried and failed," says Sargent Shriver, "then we don't have to try again. It excuses guilt—for the past and for now." Massachusetts Governor Dukakis, preaching the gospel that throwing money at problems won't solve them, can use the new creed as an excuse to cut state funding of medical care for welfare recipients.

Neoconservatism is 90 percent fashion and 10 percent substance. But it is a comfortable fad, and today fashion counts for more than substance in politics anyway. At least we could be honest about it. The essential problem of the 1960s—and of 1977—isn't too much of the New Deal, but too many of the old deals. ●

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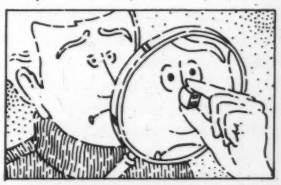

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Media/By Jane Perlez

Dirty Harold's Dream Market

Harold Robbins threw a New York bash at Regine's recently, and he did not invite Norman Mailer or Gore Vidal. Those literary luminaries were busy that night anyway, trading blows at a fancy uptown dinner party. So the king of pulp (who thinks he outclasses Mailer *and* Vidal) feted some 300 booksellers, T-shirt merchants, bookbinders, thirsty columnists and other lowly bigmouths from the publicity mills with caviar on bits of bread and disco music.

Robbins had flown in the night before from France, where he spends half the year, to start marketing himself and his 14th novel, *Dreams Die First*. Simon & Schuster have already printed 205,000 hardback copies of *Dreams*, which is Robbins' most vulgar and explicit sex book yet, with a Larry Flynt-type hero—Gareth Brendan—who starts out a Hollywood trash-sheet peddlar and hustles his way to a million-dollar porn empire. Brendan experiences everything; by the fourth line of the first chapter he's awoken to stale cigarettes and a naked boy by his bed.

Marketing *Dreams* should be a cinch for Robbins. He is ineffably crude, and is fond of boasting that he's been through everything in the book, including its climax at the most expensive gay brothel in the world ($500 minimum), modeled after a place he knows in L.A.

"You've been through all the sex scenes in the book?"

"Yes."

"You've done it all?"

"Yes. Gene Shalit asked me the same question on television, and I said to him, 'Do you want me to go into detail? Do you want me to kiss you? I'll unzip my fly.' Gene got flustered. Sure, I would have done it on television. Why not? No one's going to see anything. It's so small it's hanging out the back."

Robbins knows his 'characters' as well as he knows their haunts. He became friends with Larry Flynt when he attended the obscenity trial of *Hustler* in Cincinnati; and they share the same agent, Paul Gitlin. But this doesn't prevent Robbins from splitting hairs.

"Much to Larry Flynt's, Bob Guccione's and Hugh Hefner's disappointment," he says, "none of them are Gareth Brendan [the publisher in *Dreams*]. I'll say it's any *one* of them if they'll admit to bisexual or homosexual tendencies."

PHOTOGRAPH BY RICHARD FITZGERALD/GLOBE PHOTOS

The author in action: Robbins dreams up a witty inscription

And Harold Robbins does?

"Try and remember something. I'm 61. I grew up in the Depression. A lot of these experiences I had before today. There's homosexuality in orphanages (Robbins spent his childhood in one) . . . and these things are a part of growing up."

Which does not explain the high-priced brothels.

If Robbins shrewdly markets his own personality, he also knows when to publish his books; he has a knack of waiting until the time is ripe for easy reader identification. *The Pirate* emerged when hijacking was in the headlines; *The Betsy*, about an auto plant and its boss, was geared to Henry Ford's high profile; *The Lonely Lady* hit the stands right after Jacqueline Susann's death. *Dreams* has been in the works for a while. Robbins came up with the title and the story line eight years ago; then he sat back and waited until the mass market was ready for gay shenanigans. His next book, *Memories of Another Day*, will be about a labor leader, which, Robbins claims, has nothing to do with Jimmy Hoffa; but he's wily enough to know even a denial makes a good sales pitch.

The Harold Robbins industry is more than books, of which 30,000 are said to sell daily around the world—a total of 150 million in his 30-year career. There are Harold Robbins movies: *The Betsy*, starring Laurence Olivier, will open in February; *The Lonely Lady*, with Susan Blakely, starts shooting soon. There are Harold Robbins TV shows; three of his novels went into production this year. In L.A. there is a Harold Robbins radio station, which he owns with Quincy Jones; he has tapes from the station—"middle of the road soul"—playing wherever he goes.

It adds up to a whole lotta money. Robbins' agent/lawyer/best friend, Paul Gitlin, who rescued him from financial disaster in 1959, won't say *how* much. Nor will Simon & Schuster. Robbins says he doesn't know; he just loves to spend.

In the South of France, Robbins maintains a modest villa with a staff of four, an 85-foot yacht with a year-round crew, and five cars: two Jensen Interceptors, a Cadillac, a Chevy convertible and a Simca. In Los Angeles, at their new mansion set on four choice acres, Robbins and his wife, Grace, keep another half dozen cars, including two Rolls-Royces. In New York, where he holes up at the Plaza suite, reeling off back-to-back interviews, he breaks for meals at the Four Seasons (they start with champagne); visits the Madison Avenue Bookstore—the first bookstore he'd been to in 20 years—not to buy a book, to see the display; and drops in on a merchant hawking Dreams Die First T-shirts. He uses a limo, never a cab.

Robbins likes to give expensive watches as presents, even to himself. Several years ago he bought himself a $3,000 model on a whim; the watch amused him because it showed when Leap Year was coming. Once he flew to a Kansas meatworks so he could learn the American method of cutting beef off the carcass; he wanted to be able to instruct his French butcher.

Then there are his famous parties.

"Simon & Schuster complain that my little cocktail parties cost them a lot of money," Robbins says. "In 1975 they gave me a little party—the bill came to $3,100. After the party I took some people to dinner—the bill was $3,300. This time, after Regine's, I took 22 people to the Four Seasons. We started with Dom Perignon in magnums, and Harold Robbins salad—bibb lettuce with caviar. I don't know how much it cost. I say, add 25 percent for the help. Then they send the bill to Paul and when he gets it, he shits."

Robbins' favorite party was New Year's Eve, 1967. He took over the Four Seasons and flew the Crazy Horse Show in from Paris for a one-night stand.

"It was unbelievable. One of the girls was so stoned, she walks into the pool in the middle of the restaurant. Paul is so pissed he takes off his tie and jacket and is ready to dive in to rescue her.

"Cornelius Ryan was alive then. He was a real gentleman, and I tell him that I haven't invited any press people to the party, but there is one reporter who is really marvelous and would he mind seeing her? I bring her over—she's all wrapped up in a fur hat, a coat wrapped tightly around her, and she has a pencil and pad—and I say, 'Cornelius Ryan, this is Miss Jones from UPI.' He gets up . . . 'Please to meet you, please sit down . . . let me help you with your coat.' . . . The girl takes off her coat, and there she is—balls-ass naked!" Robbins laughs.

In spite of condescending reviews (the *New York Times* remarked that *Dreams* shows Robbins getting ever slicker), Robbins really does believe that he's the best writer around.

"Fuck 'em," he says. "They'll catch up. Let me put it this way: no two of my stories are alike. I'm very involved with today. I don't know any other writer in American literature who has done that and sold as well. There is something basic I manage to communicate about human beings. I'm pretty fuckin' good. I work at it."

Work he does. When a deadline looms Robbins locks himself up in a room, either at home in France or L.A. or, until recently, in New York. He used to keep a suite at the Elysee Hotel where he'd draw the blinds and sit for 80 days—the time it took him to finish *The Betsy*.

He pecks away, very fast, with two fingers, on an electric typewriter, of which some keys have been changed to make it easier to reach the most-used letters. It isn't difficult to imagine which letters they are; to a woman business associate and her husband, Robbins inscribed one of his books—"To the Cunt and the Competition."●

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Eng: oz. each sweet vermouth, brandy, c highball glass. Fill with gir lemon peel twist.

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Gin & Cola: 1½ ozs. Gordon's glass over ice cubes. Fill with of lime.

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TV Special: 1½ ozs. eac orange juice over ice cu Fill glass with ginger ale.

Lady Shake: 2 ozs. Gordon's Gin, 1 oz. Cointreau, ½ oz. lemon juice. Shake well over ice cubes. Strain and serve in cocktail glass.

Gin Bloody Mary: 1½ ozs. Gordon's Gin, 3 ozs. tomato juice, juice of ½ lime wedge. Stir well over ice.

Hawaii: 1½ ozs. Gordon's Gin and 3 ozs. pineapple juice over ice cubes in highball glass. Add cherry.

Dry Martini: 4 or more parts Gordon's Gin, 1 part dry vermouth. Stir well in pitcher over ice. Strain into chilled cocktail glass or over rocks. Option: Add lemon peel twist, olive, pearl onion.

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The Insider

Politics

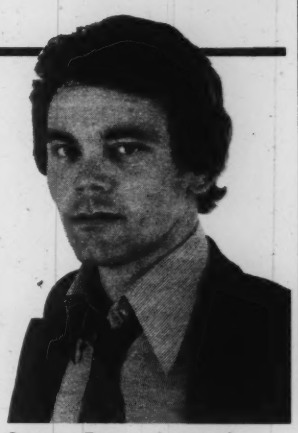
Old friends, fond memoirs

Snepp of the CIA: Saigon's Man of LaMacho Spills Beans

The latest in a series of inside-the-CIA books, this one entitled *Decent Interval*, has surprised a lot of journalists who covered the Vietnam War, not because of its content, but because of its author, Frank Snepp. Snepp was not only everyone's favorite CIA source during his two tours (69–70 and 72–75), but was also the spitting image of what an agent *should* be: handsome, athletic, paranoid, gung-ho. He was never without his .45 and his CIA bleeper, which he always concealed in his briefcase. Dressed in his ever-present dark sunglasses and a silk blue sport shirt open to the breastbone, Snepp would even drag his briefcase to the very edge of the pool at the *Cercle Sportif Saigonnais*, his favorite spot for briefing the media. Only once did he break the habit: in the middle of a debutante party at the *Newsweek* villa, Snepp was seen with a drink in one hand and a paper bag—filled, of course, with .45 and bleeper—in the other.

Except for a certain stiffness of bearing, and the occasional military jargon ("roger" this, "roger" that), Snepp mixed well with the media, and was known to share with them tokes of the local and very effective weed. Upon his return to the States, in fact, Snepp was accused of "trafficking in drugs." Incredulous, Snepp asked for specifics. "You were seen passing a joint from one person to another—that constitutes trafficking in dope," he was told. Snepp then explained that in order to keep up his contacts among the younger journalists, pot smoking was *de rigeur*.

There was, of course, a harder edge to this Bondian fantasy. Snepp would regale his friends with accounts of a bar shoot-out in which one Vietnamese officer was left dead. And then there was his blond girlfriend, whom he claimed he discovered to be a Soviet agent. Asked how he solved that problem, Snepp explained to friends that he placed enough dope on her to get her thrown out of the country, and then "had a few of her friends killed."



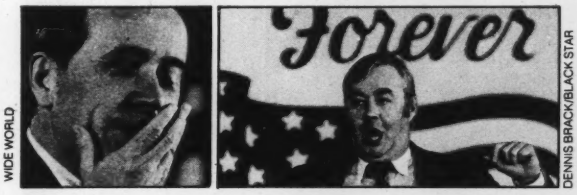
WAGNER INTERNATIONAL PHOTOS INC

Snepp: Brown-bagged beeper

"Snepp loved the CIA and the whole sense of being a CIA agent. He was an extremely proud spook," recalls one journalist and friend. "His turning on the agency obviously had to do with his anguish over the institutional disaster. Don't forget, Snepp was well-trained by the CIA in the art of the double-cross."

HACKING THROUGH THE WASHINGTON BRUSH

Walt DeeCee's Federal Fairy Tales



WIDE WORLD

DENNIS BRACK/BLACK STAR

• ***Also running:*** The junior senator from New York, Daniel Patrick Moynihan. This takes a lot of nerve. The forces of the Democratic right, speaking Wattenbergese, are pushing Moynihanism from a local into a nascent national movement. At work on this dark task are the Great Mentioners Evans and Novak, Al Barkin of the AFL-CIO and the Wattenberg himself. The senator's staff believes it can pursue a national schedule without being too obvious and still test out its thesis: that, as one neoconservative puts it, on a national electoral basis, "the only thing wrong with Scoop Jackson was that he was a bore." Moynihan is anything but.

• ***Distraught:*** The leading urbanite Democrat who heard of the burgeoning Moynihanism. Estimating the strategy of a leftward thrust by the neoconservatives with unemployment and a rightward thrust on defense, the powerful figure threw his hands up. "Moynihan! Moynihan! He'll make me campaign for Carter!"

• ***Aching:*** Chief Justice of the Supreme Court Warren Burger, who was to judge the celebrated Ames Argument at the Harvard Law School. The day before the Argument, a teach-in was scheduled with which an anti-Burger demonstration was to coincide, protesting various conservative Court tendencies. Mr. Chief Justice Burger abruptly announced that his old back problem had flared up, canceled his appearance and checked into the hospital.

White House Strikes Deal to Throw Wrench Into Brown-works

The Carter administration is fighting Jerry Brown for the 1980 presidential nomination on Brown's own turf. The Zen king of Tacos-land will have a rough time with his legislative program over the next two years, in large part due to a deal reportedly struck between the President's people and California Speaker of the House Leo McCarthy.

MARTIN ADLER LEVICK/BLACK STAR

Mr. Jerry: The ambush cometh

McCarthy wields a power over the legislature comparable to the best of them. The Carter consiglieri want badly to give the Brown administration a lot of trouble and splinter the contender's progress toward consolidating his program into a national bid.

Already starting his offensive, McCarthy recently blasted Brown's Secretary of Health and Welfare Mario Oblado as "incompetent." The Speaker has told friends that he wouldn't be opposed to the Democratic gubernatorial or senatorial nomination.

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86 PROOF

Is there life after Daley?

Bilandic's Inherited Machine Gets Teat Caught in Taxi-Meter

A powerful but relatively obscure Chicago attorney has become the focus of considerable attention in the latest scandal to hit The Machine since the death of its boss, Richard J. Daley, almost a year ago.

His name is Don Reuben, a lawyer who has represented many figures in the Chicago establishment, including Yellow and Checker cab companies and the Chicago *Tribune*. His name emerged in the controversial memo leaked to the press recently by the City Commissioner of Consumer Affairs, who charges that Mayor Michael Bilandic "greased" the way for an 11.86 percent fare hike granted the taxi companies during the summer. The charges leveled by Commissioner Jane Byrne, a long-time Daley ally, are these: That the taxi companies, seeking an unjustified rate increase, worked with the Mayor to get City Council approval of the boost and altered accounting statements and gross income figures along the way. Bilandic, the cab owners, and powerful members of the council were all implicated by Byrne, who says the increase was "fraudulent, conspiratorial and should not have been granted."

Byrne says that Reuben, as attorney for both the cab firms and the paper, was asked to "get hold of his people at the *Tribune* and kill any adverse publicity."

Tribune editors denied that they had held off on the story, going so far as to print a lengthy self-justification in the Sunday opinion pages. Their essay admitted a *Tribune* reporter had received a copy of Byrne's memo on background in August but was unable to confirm the story elsewhere. *Tribune* editors say they refused to run with any serious allegations that were attributed simply to "City Hall sources." "Given the work that two reporters put into it [to confirm the story] and given the fact that they came to a dead end, I think we behaved honorably," said Maxwell McCrohon, *Tribune* managing editor. McCrohon admits, however, that he had a phone conversation with Reuben in September in which the cab story came up.

(It was the second time in a month that the *Tribune* was being questioned on its journalistic ethics. Earlier, Chicago *Daily News* columnist Mike Royko had reported that two close Daley friends had secretly profited stockholders in the concession firm operating newsstands at O'Hare Airport—represented by Daley's son—when they received the city contract without entering competitive bidding. When Royko broke the story, all the media in town acknowledged the scoop—except the *Tribune*, which ran an identical story on page one pretending that it was their work.)

WIDE WORLD

The Boss: He never woulda let it happen

While Cook County and federal grand juries, along with the Federal Trade Commission, launched investigations into the cab scandal, there was a final irony: Had it not been for the O' Hare story the cab controversy would not have broke. After Royko's story, Bilandic, acting quickly, essentially admitted the scandal by revoking the O'Hare contract and reopening it for bidding. That angered old Daley supporters who felt Bilandic's contrition was too overstated. The leaking of the cab memo, it is believed, was the old guard retribution. As more than one Chicagoan was heard to say, "It never woulda happened with Daley."

Jimmy C. Will Increase NASA's Budget If Good Friend Jerry B. Will Take Permanent Space Walk

Jimmy Carter, who as late as the last presidential election was known as a master of political symbolism, has not escaped the cosmical message of the man with an even more perfect grasp—the 39-year-old perfect master of political symbolism, Jerry Brown.

Ecotopia in orbit: *This solar satellite can collect enough energy to power Los Angeles. California could easily afford to maintain one—its annual budget surplus almost equals the annual NASA federal allocation*

Brown's most recent display came in his flashy support for American space initiatives—support which could cause a skittish President to cripple the federal program.

"There seems to be a backlash from the White House whenever Brown talks about space," a senior staff scientist at NASA headquarters in Washington told us. "Every time Jerry Brown says something about space, the OMB [Office of Management and Budget] comes after our budget," another high NASA official said.

NASA contractors reportedly have been "encouraged" to steer clear of Brown, on pain of thinner contracts. And the OMB is said to be considering cutting back the planned fleet of five space shuttles to three.

Brown's fabulously ambitious California dreaming goes far beyond little things like the White House: Last August, Brown and his state hosted a convocation of aerospace executives, NASA officials and media and space supporters for something called Space Day. Rockwell International—central contractor for the space shuttle—payed for the celebration. Introducing his cabinet, Brown chilled White House spines with his unveiled ecotopian threat: "We have plenty of money for space. In fact, I'd like to point out that our state surplus is just slightly smaller than the entire NASA budget. I'm not offering it . . . [laughter] but I do set it as a yardstick of what's possible."

The Bad Taste Elks Take Vacation in Sunny Jo'Burg

If it seems like the wrong time for a vacation in South Africa to some of us, the time is ripe for 260 Elks from Fargo, North Dakota. According to the South African Tourist Corporation, the Elks will sponsor the first exclusive destination charter from the U. S. to South Africa, departing February 18.

Reports of unrest in South Africa are "greatly exaggerated," states the *Elkhorn*, the Fargo Elks' newsletter.

The *Elkhorn* comments on the low prices, luxury facilities and friendly English-speaking people of South Africa whose history "is a

Seventies

facsimile of the United States . . . the Voortrekkers are the same as the American pioneers who traveled overland by covered wagon."

—Chris Keller

California Encounters

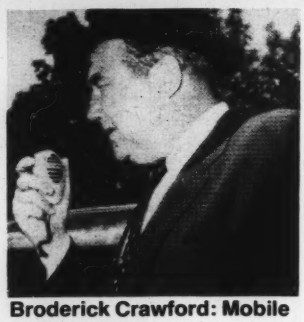
They Shoot Buicks, Don't They?

In California, where a car is necessary for virtually everything (fast food, procreation, tape cassette appreciation, etc.), mobile wanton violence seems to be in vogue. Since January of this year, there have been 49 assaults on officers of the California Highway Patrol, as well as numerous snipings and slashings between fellow motorists.

This summer a young man driving with a friend down a San Jose freeway spotted an old blue Chevy moving erratically. The driver's companion shouted something at the Chevy. The man in the Chevy apparently didn't get the joke. He pulled out a gun and shot the young driver three times. The freeway gunman got away by melting into the ceaseless California traffic. The young driver is still hospitalized with permanent brain damage.

"All of these people have frustrations but the people in the barrio get theirs out by driving their old cars while the guy in the Mercedes is really worrying out there," explains Captain Ray Johnson, who runs the CHP's busy L.A. Central office.

Middle-class women, particularly professionals, are the most dangerous drivers to contend with, according to many CHP officers. "The female is the most difficult person," says officer Ed Prieto, a



Broderick Crawford: Mobile law and order

6'5" motorcycle cop. "Once they realize you are going to arrest them, they try to seduce you. But when they fail, they really get angry. They can understand you're arresting them but they can't dig you're turning down what they're offering. If they are going to get violent, that is usually the turning point."

Prieto, dressed in jack boots and helmet, looking like Daarth Vaader on a motorcycle, believes the pressures of L.A.'s traffic, business and family problems may be bringing out the violent tendencies in normally well-behaved motorists. "It's like rats together. When there are too many rats, they start fighting," the CHP man theorizes. "They get wound up. There's no room. People start getting mad like animals."

In his ten years on the force, Prieto has learned to accept any verbal abuse good-naturedly because being cussed at is vastly preferable to getting blown away. "I guess I can take any abuse they shout at me," Prieto jokes. "Hell, it's to a point that if all they do is call you an M.F., you say thank you." *—Joel Kotkin*

Wall Street Lays Egg But Calls Carter the Incubator

Though a 1929 style Crash still seems remote (October 29, 1977 passed without a

DENNIS BRACK/BLACK STAR

Wall Street: Sweeping the bloody ticker remains

peep), an Eisenhower recession more and more seems a real possibility to Wall Street investors. Just to hear Jimmy Carter's name is to be reminded that the market is down almost 200 points since Inauguration Day. As one well-placed broker puts it, "A smart crook like Nixon is better than an incompetent who thinks he has a pipeline to God."

The problem is Carter's mounting "crisis of confidence," a mood that has left businessmen hesitant to invest in capital spending. "Investors are just waiting for Carter to command, to act, to really be president," says Wall Street seismograph Gordon Williams, *Business Week* editor. "No one is going to build plants, raise production goals, or expand into new fields when it's amateur night on the Potomac." Or, as Mobil Oil Vice-President of Public Affairs Herbert Schmertz puts it, "There is just too much uncertainty over capital formation to reinvest."

Carter's spending policies, according to some financial observers, smack of schizophrenia. On the one hand, his more fiscally conservative measures have replaced Keynesian/inflationary full employment and a $50 tax re-

The Word

bate, while, in contradiction to his campaign promises of 4 percent inflation, farm supports and the minimum wage have increased. A Merrill Lynch portfolio strategist says it best: "Investors are still desperate for one line of thought—to know if he's for capital formation or really a scary, populist egalitarian."

Summing up the general mood, John J. Hilson, vice chairman of the Board of Wertherin & Company, laments, "If we had Ford, or a clear voice today, instead of this Democratic Hoover, the Dow would be at least 100 points higher. There is just no confidence in him, and that's half the price of stock. My friends and I are only worried that there will be such a political bloodbath in 1980. The stock market will be destroyed, and hundreds of businesses wiped out." *—Ed Kiersh*

RCMP vs. NORML

Marijuana arrests are up 12 percent nationwide in Canada and 55 percent in tough-minded Alberta province, so there was nothing unusual about

LARRY SCHOTT

Stroup: Canada dry

Customs detaining a passenger at Calgary airport found to possess two grams of pot—unless it turned out to be Keith Stroup, Director of the National Organization for the Reform of Marijuana Laws (NORML) on his way to give a speech at the University of Calgary.

What gave Stroup away was his lapel pin. Noticing it wasn't exactly a maple leaf, Customs officials asked more questions, conducted a full search of his luggage and person, finding NORML literature, lapel pins, a pack of rolling papers and a roach clip before discovering the two grams.

They turned Stroup over to the Royal Canadian Mounted Police. Bail was set at $300, but since Stroup was carrying only $35 cash, the lecture bureau secured the amount from the student fund and sprung the public interest lawyer, who by this time was 45 minutes late to a 7 o'clock lecture.

"What got me in trouble," he said later, "was not anything I had said or anything I was going to say at the university. It was that I had the gall to wear my pin on my lapel."

In the future Stroup plans to limit himself to domestic work. *—Mark Lewis*

Born again, naturally

Colson Says BioPic Won't Be "Herbie Goes to Washington"

Hollywood producer Bob Munger, formerly one of California's top advertising executives, and Charles Colson, formerly one of Richard Nixon's top hatchet men, are teaming up to push a new product on the big screen: Born Again Christianity. The fundamentalist duo are responsible for the upcoming movie version of Colson's book, *Born Again*, which tells of the personal transformation of the Nixon aide after Watergate from, as Munger puts it, "a rat to a born again Christian."

Munger says the idea came out of a meeting last December at his Hollywood Hills home with Colson and former Nixon henchman John Dean. Colson, who says he was offered movie rights by 12 different producers, met Munger through their mutual friend, Pat Boone. Dean Jones, veteran star of the *Herbie* and the *Shaggy Dog* series and a born-againer himself, is signed up to play Colson in the movie.

This born-again brotherhood has big plans for their movie, which starts shooting in Washington in mid-December. Colson has been working with script writer Walter Bloch on the screenplay.

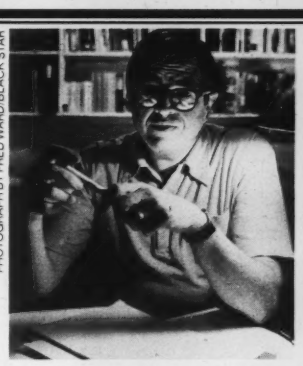
"I think a lot of people will laugh at us, they'll think this is like *Herbie Goes to Washington* or the *Shaggy Dog Becomes the White House Hatchet Man*," Colson said. "But I hope that we'll have the same message of the book. The book is changing the lives of thousands. I hope the movie uplifts the lives of millions."

On the way to this Hollywood heaven, producer Munger believes there will be clouds lined with gelt. He cites a recent Gallup poll which shows some 70 million Americans claiming to have been born again, as proof there's a ready market for the Colson film.

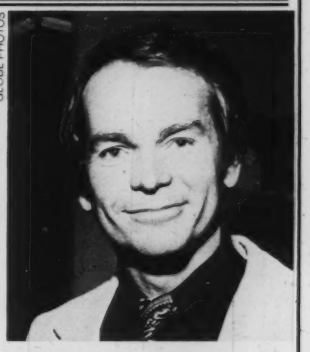
"This is a very timely picture. It's not only going to be an artistic success but it's going to be big box office too," the leisure-suited producer says. "If I was an atheist who wanted to make money, I'd still do the movie for that reason."

Colson meanwhile has pledged his share of the $3 million movie to the Prison Fellowship, his Virginia-based religious group, which attempts to convert convicts into ministers. Another well-known Washington figure, former Iowa liberal Democrat Harold Hughes, is also getting into show biz by playing himself in the movie. Munger claims the senator-turned-God-servant is "a natural actor."

If the movie works out as Munger and Colson see it, *Born Again* could ignite a new series of Hollywood religious movies, one trend Hollywood hasn't seen too much of since Charlton Heston went in for earthquakes. But the former Special Counsel says a career in show biz doesn't appeal to him. After *Born Again*, Colson says he will devote himself full-time to spreading the gospel. —*Joel Kotkin*

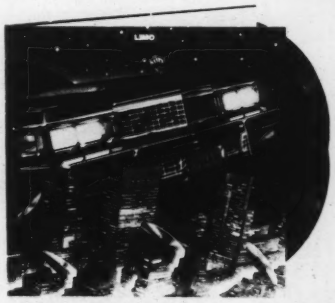


PHOTOGRAPH BY FRED WARD/BLACK STAR



GLOBE PHOTOS

Colson and Jones: Writer and righteous



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Notes from a Merry Junketeer

Unwarranted But Unreturned Gifts From Columbia Pictures

For *Gone with the Wind*'s Atlanta premiere David Selznick gave each journalist a GWTW-branded typewriter. The wildly diverse writers invited to New York and Los

NANCY WEINSTOCK

Junket junkies: In payola we trust

Angeles for the *Close Encounters of the Third Kind* press premieres took away CE3K-marked tape recorders and a six-pack of color coordinated tapes.

In between the two events, thousands of journalists logged millions of miles in pursuit of the inedible junket, cushioned by first-class seats and buoyed by billows of booze. But even by the old yardsticks, for sheer breadth of numbers and thoroughness of detail the *Close Encounters* field marshaling was unique. The list of invites was expanded to political cartoonists and writers, columnists, feature writers, science editors, managing editors, "almost anyone who had a voice," according to Barry Lorie, the National Publicity and Promotion Director. Metropolitan papers collected as many as eight invitations; small-town weeklies got two or three—in all, a list of 1,500 names, all of whom were to be flown to Los Angeles for a screening on October 24.

It was the detail work that impressed old-line junketeers. Cab vouchers accompanied the first-class plane tickets. There were color-coded tickets to the screening, breakfast press conference, and the closing luncheon—for "security control." The extra tapes were also color-coded to match the rooms where the interviews were to happen.

But even the best-planned military maneuvers go awry. The press screening was postponed to November 10 due to "technical procedures." Then Columbia announced that there would be *two* screenings—one in New York and one in Los Angeles.

Groans arose from New York, where everyone had arranged vacations on the west coast around the trek. At the L.A. press screening, the tapes arrived for the tape recorders with their erase-proof plugs already broken out. This resulted in baffled, unmechanical writers at the press breakfast shaking their unmoving machines to their ears like wrist-watches. The press interview, scheduled to run until 1:00 (thus using the full rainbow of tapes provided), sputtered to a stop at 10:15, and was not remarkably informative in between. Spielberg ventured that "It would demean the movie for me to make a general statement about it."

And so it went. Afterward, a baffled feeling pervaded. To come so far for so little substance. Many decamped early, despite the outdoor buffet.

One young writer came up to a publicity man whose multiple gold chains glinted through the thin smog.

"Thanks for having me," he said warmly.

"Okay, sure." As the writer walked out of earshot, the publicist added broadly, "Thanks for being had."

—Sheila Benson

Better Than a Lottery Ticket: Your Social Security Card

There's this woman in Philadelphia—let's call her Sylvia. She was a student at an upstate Pennsylvania college when her mother was informed by Social Security that Sylvia would be eligible for Supplemental Security Insurance (SSI) checks if she would just be nice enough to fill out a form. Sylvia felt nice enough, and filled out the form in June. In September she got a surprise.

A check came from the Social Security Administration (not SSI) for $3,000. Two weeks later another check arrived, with a different Social Security number than her own on it. This one was for $7,400. A few weeks ago she got another check, this from Kansas City. It was for $101. A letter from Baltimore requested that she fill out another form to remain eligible for further benefits. "I filled it out and sent it in," Sylvia told us. "I am waiting for $70,000 to arrive so that I can retire and move to Mexico."

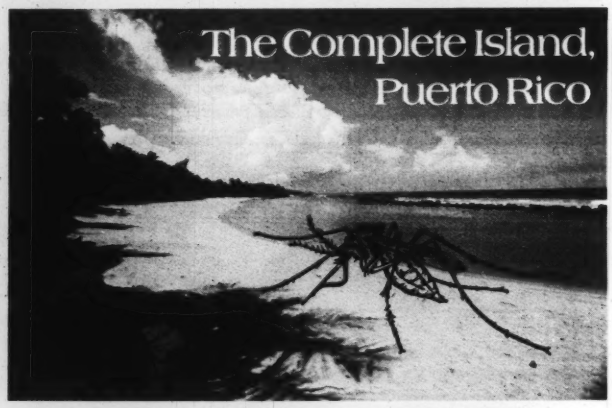
While the case of Miss X may seem extraordinary, the fact is that SSA has long been plagued with a high error rate for its computerized operations. One of its sub-programs, SSI, had a 23.7 percent error rate for the last six months of 1975, of which 7.8 percent was for ineligible payments.

Since SSI distributed $5.7 billion through its computers in 1976, a 7.8 percent error rate means that during that year $444.6 million was sent out in ineligible payments.

If this same error rate is applied to the entire SSA system, and it may well be, the amounts become truly staggering. SSA Commissioner James B. Cardwell gave testimony before the House Ways and Means Oversight Subcommittee in 1976, saying that SSA sent out 408 million checks by computer for a total of $79 billion. A 7.8 percent error rate for that amount would mean a mind-boggling $6.07 billion in checks sent to people who were ineligible.

Although HEW has over 129,000 full-time employees, the Office of Investigation and Security has only 10 investigators and a 10-year backlog of cases.

—Marleen Nienhuis
Dan McGowan



Upping the San Juan Kill

If it's not too late, cancel those winter vacation plans to Puerto Rico. No, it's not the natives; they're as friendly as ever. It's the mosquitoes.

Doctors at the U.S. Center for Disease Control in Atlanta report an outbreak on the island of a serious viral disease called dengue fever, which is spread by mosquitoes. The fever totally flattens you for about a week and causes skin eruptions as well as muscle and joint pain. If a pregnant woman gets it, she's likely to miscarry.

Officials warn that the mosquito transmitting the fever exists throughout the island and can be found near any hotel or home, no matter how posh. The insect tends to congregate, however, on the northeastern shore because of

Mind & Body

the area's dense population and heavy rainfall.

If you do go to Puerto Rico, doctors recommend wearing as much protective clothing as possible—even on the beach—and taking along a good supply of bug repellent.

—Larry Frederick

It's Got a Good Beat— You Can Sit to It

Dr. John Diamond, an Australian psychiatrist and holistic physician practicing in New York City, believes, and can demonstrate convincingly, that a certain kind of rhythm in rock music considerably reduces the muscular strength of any person listening to it. The enfeebling beat, he says, is a stopped anapestic rhythm (short, short, *long*, pause), which has appeared in recordings by the Rolling

The Stones: Rock'n roll over

Stones ("Satisfaction"), the Doors, Janis Joplin, the Band and others, but curiously, not in Dylan, Presley, or the Beatles.

About five of the Billboard Top Ten on any given week, though, have the rhythm, Diamond says, and while in the act of listening to recordings of music with it, more than 90 percent of hundreds of people he's tested on an electronic strain gauge have registered instantaneous loss of 2/3 of their normal muscle strength. The effect is operative regardless of the volume level of the music, and blood pressure and pulse don't alter with it. Diamond is currently investigating an electronics factory where productivity increased 30 percent when the muzak was switched from a rock to an easy-listening station. A trained kinesiologist who often treats patients with tape recordings of their own heart sounds, Diamond conjectures that the muscles weaken because the dum-dum-DAH is the exact opposite of the body's heart and arterial rhythm (namely, a dactyl, like a waltz) and creates a mix-up in alpha waves between the two hemispheres of the brain and a resulting "muscle dyslexia." Sure enough, his tests also seem to indicate that waltz music strengthens you.

"The anapestic accent can be in duration or volume," he explains. "*Stopped* means you expect it to go on but it stops. But if it's played fast enough, it doesn't have the same effect." After analyzing some 20,000 recordings, he has found the rhythm in no jazz music, in almost no ethnic music (save for one minute of Haitian voodoo drum music), and in only two classical compositions, "where the composer set out to create chaos": the finales of Stravinsky's *Rite of Spring* and Ravel's *La Valse*.

Frankensteinian ventures

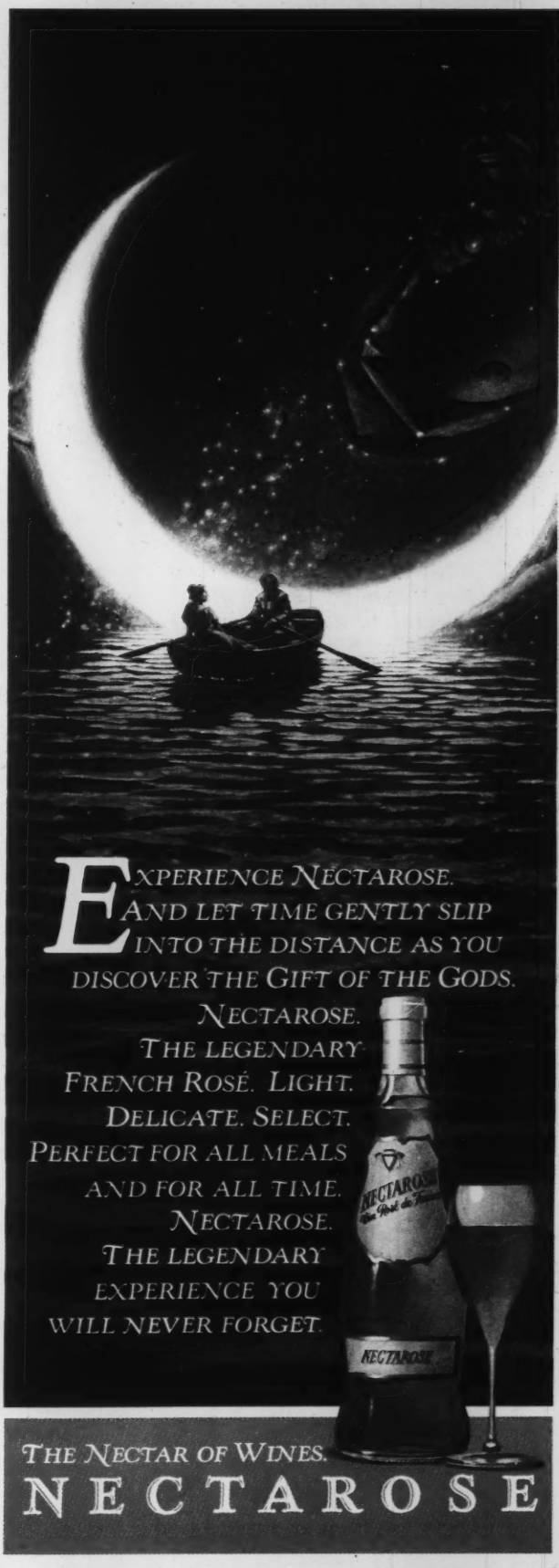
Look! Victor! It's Rising! You've Brought It Back to Life!

For many years, restoring a severed hand has seemed one of medicine's greatest feats. But now it's been topped. In Atlanta, surgeons have given a young man his penis back, after it was amputated in an act of vengeance.

The 20-year-old victim was attacked by his girlfriend's estranged husband, who cut off his penis with one slash of a butcher's knife. It took six hours for the victim to reach Atlanta's Emory University Hospital—the mutilation occured in rural South Carolina—but fortunately the penis was kept on ice.

A team of six Emory surgeons worked for three hours, joining the organ's vein, two arteries, and two nerves, and implanting a plastic tube (catheter) to divert urine and hold the penis in place till healing occurred. When the patient was discharged from the hospital a couple of weeks later, the chief surgeon said the young man already had erectile function back and was feeling "very comfortable."

—Larry Frederick



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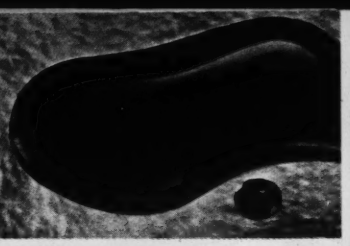

UNION CARBIDE SEES

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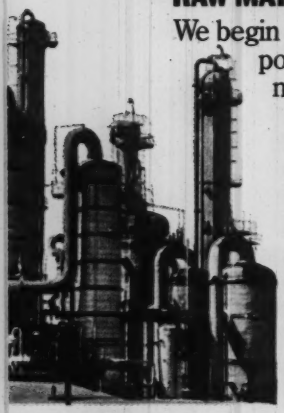

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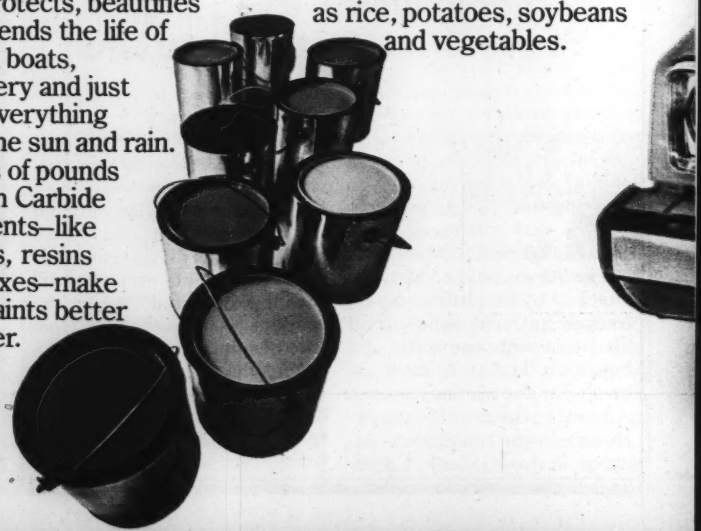

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ATTICUS FINCH GOES TO WASHINGTON

Frank Johnson, director designate of the FBI, may be a little coarse for the Capitol's bureaucracy with his pranks, spittoons and Levi Garrett chewing tobacco, but when it comes to justice, Johnson spits only with the best

by Lawrence Wright

Sunk into marble atop the Capitol steps in Montgomery, Alabama, there is a bronze star where tourists—white tourists—like to stand to have their pictures taken. It commemorates the spot where Jefferson Davis took the oath of office and the Confederacy was born. Standing on this star today, one can almost feel the convulsions of the civil rights decade: the bus boycott, the Freedom Riders, the bombings, the beatings, the impossible bravery of solitary black schoolchildren, and finally the tremor of 50,000 people nearing the end of the Selma-to-Montgomery march, entering Dexter Avenue for that last mile to the Capitol, headed for this very spot, this very star.

Until December 1, 1955, when a weary black seamstress named Rosa Parks refused to give up her seat on a city bus, you could still stand here and feel you were at the axis of a slow-wheeling constellation: the lazy South, the separate-and-entirely-unequal white man's South. Until that day, Martin Luther King Jr. was simply the new colored preacher at the Dexter Avenue Baptist Church, a block below the Capitol steps; you could see him there after Sunday services greeting the congregation—a short man, half hidden by bonnets, 26 years old and still oblivious to the events that would bring him a Nobel Prize and martyrdom.

George Wallace was then, in 1955, an obscure circuit judge of liberal reputation and parched ambition in Barbour County, clear over by the Georgia line. But in his mind's eye he could already see the statehouse, floating like a mirage on his horizon. Seven years later he would stand on Jeff Davis' star to be inaugurated as Governor of Alabama and would sing out to the world: "In the name of the greatest people that ever trod this earth, I draw the line in the dust and toss down the gauntlet before the feet of tyranny. And I say: Segregation now! Segregation tomorrow! Segregation forever!"

WIDE WORLD

G-man: Johnson dressed like one in '59

What Wallace had learned in those seven years is the old political adage that you can't pick your friends but you can choose your enemies. The greatest enemy in Wallace's long career, which brought him close to the presidency three times, was to be Frank Minis Johnson Jr., then the new U.S. District Judge in Montgomery, at 37 the youngest federal judge in the nation. Johnson had been on the bench less than a month before Rosa Parks refused to relinquish her bus seat, setting off an explosion of events that would make Frank Johnson the most hated white man in Alabama, as well as the single most powerful judge in the nation, a judge whose decisions would alter the face of the South forever—and eventually would make him Jimmy Carter's choice for FBI director.

"Johnson is the classic hero in a time of anti-heroes," says Charles Morgan, the former president of the American Civil Liberties Union. "He's the best judge in the United States and probably the best man. Certainly, he's the best man I can think of for the FBI."

When Frank Johnson first arrived in Montgomery in 1955, he already was a curiosity: a fist-jawed, hillbilly Republican in a state full of Dixiecrats and Yellow Dog Democrats; an Eisenhower import from Winston County in the hills of north Alabama, that outpost of renegades and religious recluses who were descended from Andy Jackson Indian fighters.

On the bench, Johnson is as hard-rocked and remote as Winston County itself; yet among his friends Johnson is fa-

PHOTOGRAPH BY DAVID BURNETT/CONTACT

mous as a storyteller and practical joker, whose predilections run toward sour-mash whiskey, Levi Garrett chewing tobacco, Lincoln automobiles and Bear Bryant football. At 59, he's six-foot-one with a premature stoop—a dry, ironic man with tangled gray eyebrows and a collie nose, a banjo twang and a sideways manner of smiling. If you passed him on the street in his invariable working wardrobe of a black suit and black tie, you might pardonably mistake him for the local undertaker.

Were you to view him in his courtroom, however, your impression would be entirely different. Johnson disdains judicial robes—when he enters court, he assumes a pair of half-moon glasses, and they are all he needs to establish his authority. The usual low-level whispering, the ebb and flow of judicial spectators, is unknown in Johnson's courtroom. "He feels about his court the way a lot of people feel about church," says a friend, Dr. Nace Cohen. "It's sanctified."

The room itself looks like an Episcopal chapel: dark wood panels with ordered pews and a frescoed ceiling that is Johnson's pride.

(Once he decided that his ceiling had grown dim and needed restoration, but the General Services Administration would have no part of it; they told him instead that they would lower the ceiling and install acoustical tile, the current fashion in federal decor. Not in Frank Johnson's court, they wouldn't. He arranged for an art class from Columbus, Georgia, to be bused to Montgomery, and for a week a dozen teenagers were hanging from the scaffolds with gold paint and camel-hair brushes—the only time in living memory that rock music ever violated the Judge's chambers.)

Johnson is not ascetic, as he's been described, but he does consider economy next to godliness. That much is clear in his courtroom, and even more so in his commod walnut-walled, minimally furnished office. Johnson loves wood, likes to work with it, likes to see its grain clearly. In his office foyer, there's a walnut grandfather clock he built, and another of mahogany in his home. On his chamber walls hangs his commission as U.S. judge from Eisenhower, a portrait of his father, and photographs of his two great Danes, the Tennessee River, and his good friend Sam Durden, who really *is* the local undertaker.

His desk these days groans under stacks of file folders and briefing books from the Justice Department. "*Ab*stracts of news reports," Johnson drawls. "Now that I'm going to the FBI they think I need all this. Don't worry. I don't intend to let anyone, however well-intentioned, keep me from knowing what I need to know." He lowers his head briefly below his desk to zero in on the spittoon at his feet. He has a reputation as a careful spitter. He keeps another

WIDE WORLD

Freedom rider: Welcome to Montgomery

spittoon in his car, and when he's temporarily at loss for a receptacle—when he's out to dinner or at a very occasional cocktail party—he'll use a Styrofoam cup.

There's a tap on the door and the bailiff sticks his head in. "It's started, Judge." Indeed, one can hear a mild commotion outside in the street below the Judge's window. "Did you ever see a Klan rally?" the Judge asks his visitor with some enthusiasm. "Come on, let's go in the Clerk's office—we can get a better look."

In the hall Johnson runs into his law clerks, Harvard and Yale, who appear sleepless and generally frantic from a week of lucubrating over his upcoming FBI confirmation hearings. "You're missing the Klan rally," Johnson chides his clerks, and seems disappointed when they fail to rush to the windows to view the paltry remnants of the Montgomery Klan protesting the Panama Canal treaty.

The windows of the second floor of the Montgomery post office are deep-set behind a false colonnade, and in order to get a good look at the small scruffy group below, a reporter and one of the clerks have to stand on a table.

"Are they wearing their robes?" Johnson asks from the floor.

"One of them is," the reporter reports.

Johnson emits a satisfied cackle. He looks tan and fit from five days in Florida, but he still remains hunched from his abdominal surgery, as if he had just taken a great blow to the midriff. Johnson had an aneurysm on his aorta, which Dr. Michael De Bakey in Houston replaced last August with an 18-inch Dacron tube. At home, the Judge keeps pictures of the operation at home and likes to show his scar to friends.

"Ever since I woke up in Intensive Care all I could hear was, 'Judge, get the gas off your stomach!' Every morning this hospital entourage would come around and they would all punch you and ask you questions. 'Judge, how you comin' with your gas project?'" The Judge remembers this indignity with a sour expression, as if he had just tasted Chinese mustard. "Well, after the fellow took out my stitches they come around and Dr. De Bakey says, 'Judge, you seem to be in great shape.'

"'Well, I just got one problem, Doc. Somehow down here where you sewed me up you made a *misconnection*. I thought I'd been getting along with this gas emission project all right, but I didn't get complete relief until I got the stitches out. The gas started emanating from the stitch holes. I think there just has to be a misconnection.'

"There's this stunned silence. I think it was one of the residents who finally spoke up. Says, 'That won't take more than a minor surgical procedure.' I tell him that I did have in mind a small surgical procedure, but not the one he described.

" 'Well, what would you like, Judge?'

" 'What I want is different size holes, so I can like a flute play *Good-night LAdies*!'" The Judge sings the punch line and drums his stomach. "I thought that was pretty funny. My wife tells me it's crude."

Judges occupy a special place in Southern life and literature, part of a larger role that is institutionalized in Southern society: the Atticus Finch figure, the incorruptible individual who stands against the passions of his time—and even against his own sympathies and biases—to do what he knows is right.

"There is a passage in *To Kill a Mockingbird* where Miss Maudie is describing Atticus," says Charles Morgan. "She says, 'Whether he knows it or not, we're paying him the highest tribute we can pay a man. We trust him to do right.' Well, Johnson was that way in the Middle District of Alabama, just as Judge Horton was that way in Scottsboro, and Hugo Black on the Supreme Court. The South requires it. And it doesn't have to be a judge—it could be a lawyer, or a newspaperman, like Ralph McGill, it could even be a bus driver. The point is, that is the role into which all federal judges were appointed in the South. Some lived up to that standard, some didn't. Johnson did. And no matter who you were in that community you were safer because he was there." Johnson so thoroughly impersonates the role of the Southern judge that even his friends call him Judge, as if that were his first name,

or his only name.

"You don't make decisions on the basis of public acceptance," Johnson explains. "A judge must decide cases on the basis of fact and on the basis of applicable law. Citizens feel secure coming to a court where that's done. They don't feel secure coming to a court where the judge may have the reputation of deciding cases on the basis of whether it's going to meet public approval."

Judge works fast. He sometimes has led the entire nation in the disposition of cases, and lawyers know that they had better be as well prepared as he is when they enter his court; for if ever they get their wheels caught in the mud or begin to stall, Johnson will peer down from Olympus and deliver a savage commentary on the consequences of procrastination. "In the course of any trial you don't know what he's going to eat you out about, but you know he's going to get on you for something," says Albert Copeland, who has practiced in front of Judge for more than 20 years. "At least he's indiscriminate: if he chews you out, you know he'll chew out your adversary. There are a number of lawyers who prefer not to go to Johnson's court simply

Johnson so thoroughly impersonates the role of the southern judge that even his friends call him Judge

because it entails such a great amount of work. It's a physical ordeal. One of my partners tried a two-week case in front of him—that's like a month before any other judge—and he lost 15 pounds! It's so *intense* in that courtroom; it's more intense than any other place I've ever seen."

Over the years the tales that came out of Johnson's court evolved into a genre of Alabama folklore. Montgomery lawyers tell them like ghost stories, usually over lunch at the Elite (pronounced ee-light) Cafe. "I'm just like an old piling in the water, picking up barnacles," Johnson says of such tales. "It's just because I've been here so long." There was the time John Godbold, now on the Fifth Circuit of the U.S. Court of Appeals, used his suggestive eyebrows once too often for Johnson's liking. "I was the only lawyer in history who was threatened with contempt because of the expression on his face," Judge Godbold recalls. One gets the feeling that the best anecdotes are reserved for newsmen and out-of-towners, the way that people in Drumnadrochit save up yarns about the Loch Ness Monster. There is one story, though, which happens to be true, about a young Justice Department lawyer who came to Alabama to try a civil rights case

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WIDE WORLD

WIDE WORLD

During the civil rights decade in Alabama, freedom rider buses were bombed, archaic prisons reformed...

before Johnson. He went to lunch at the Elite, was fed some choice Judge stories, and by the time the federal man's case finally reached Johnson's court he was possibly more scared and better prepared than he had ever been in his life. Judge Johnson finally entered the courtroom (through a door in a blue wall spangled with gold stars—as if he'd dropped from the sky); he disposed of preliminary motions and then asked the government to begin its opening argument. The prosecutor stood up and opened his mouth, but nothing came out. He stood there a moment with his arm raised and his mouth open, white-faced as Lot's wife, and then fell in a dead faint before the bench. As the bailiff carried the body away, another legend was born at the Elite.

It was in this court that organized Southern resistance to desegregation was dismantled. It was like a long game of chess between the states and the courts, and no one played it more intently than George Wallace and Frank Johnson. It ended with Johnson either singly or as a member of a three-judge panel desegregating 107 school systems in the state, more than any judge in the country; he desegregated the buses, the bus terminals, the parks, the museums, the mental institutions, the jails and prisons, the airports, the libraries; he demanded that the legislature reapportion itself, and when it refused to do so he drew up the first reapportionment plan ever designed by a court; he changed the state's electoral system, its voter registration procedures, and abolished the poll tax; he was the first judge in the South to put women on his juries; he changed the system of taxation in Alabama; he took over the administration of the prisons and the mental hospitals, and he instituted hiring policies in all state agencies. The entire design of Alabama society, in other words, was changed by Johnson's hand; during Wallace's 1976 presidential campaign, a number of national publications began referring to Johnson as "the *real* governor of Alabama."

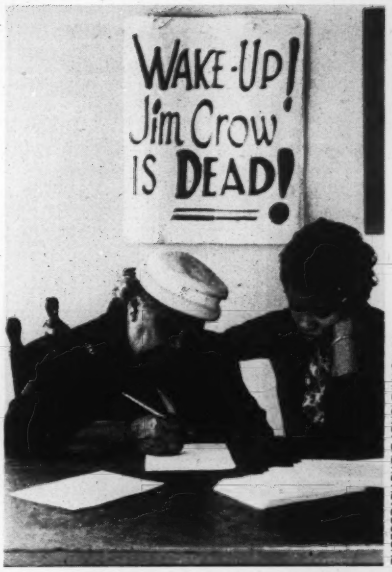
Johnson called the need for such rulings the "Alabama Punting Syndrome"—the tactic of public officials to send knotty political or social problems to the courts for resolution, and then to put up a fight (or the appearance of one) no matter what the decision. The clearest examples of the syndrome came with the state's resistance to Johnson's school desegregation orders. (Johnson's school plans typically did not employ busing to achieve a racial balance; in fact, school desegregation effected an actual decrease in busing in Alabama, because of the substantial number of children who had been bused for the *opposite* reason.) Governor Wallace used fabulous ploys to dodge the court, including closing the schools and making them "private institutions" financed by "tuition grants." When the Supreme Court demanded that Alabama submit a desegregation plan that it could live with, however, the state used Frank Johnson's concept of neighborhood schools.

The entire design of Alabama society was changed by Johnson's hand

"A judge doesn't look for tough cases," observes Charles Morgan, "but when he gets one he has about 16 different options. He can do the right thing. He can do the wrong thing. Or he can find 14 different ways of avoiding doing the right thing." Johnson's willingness to do the right thing has led him on a long odyssey into the dark side of the human spirit. The history of his cases is a history of the state as outlaw—and of the savagery which that fact inevitably fostered. It was no coincidence that the roughneck resistance of the state to desegregation was followed by violence in communities that were under court orders, or that the brutality of the state troopers in 1965 at the Edmund Pettus Bridge in Selma—charging into the assembled demonstrators on horseback, swinging their billy clubs and cracking their whips—prefigured the nightrider slaying of Viola Luizzo two weeks later.

Despite the eyewitness testimony of an FBI informer, the Klan killers of Luizzo were acquitted in state court, and conventional wisdom was that the same thing would happen in Johnson's federal court, where the three men were tried for violating Luizzo's civil rights. Although the Justice Department sent its best prosecutor, John Doar (later chief counsel to the House impeachment committee), to handle the case, the jury reported after a single night's deliberations that it was "hopelessly deadlocked." Johnson gave the 12 white men a bodeful stare, reminded them how much the trial already had cost the government, and then issued his famous "dynamite charge": "There is no reason to assume that the case will ever be submitted to 12 more intelligent, more impartial or more competent men to decide it, or that more or clearer evidence will be produced on one side or the other," he told them in wintry tones, and then sent them back to reconsider. Three hours later they found the Klansmen guilty, and Judge sentenced each to 10 years in prison, the maximum penalty.

More subtly, the same correlation between official lawlessness and personal



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PHOTOGRAPH BY CHARLES MOORE/BLACK STAR

... and blacks registered to vote despite official repression. At the eye of the storm: Frank Johnson

brutality existed in Alabama state institutions, particularly in the prisons. In one check of the medical records of 2,000 inmates at Holman Prison in Atmore, it was found that only 40 had *not* been injured over a two-year period; half of the injuries were knifings or beatings, and two or three inmates per week were being treated for torn rectums from homosexual assaults. In two important cases, *Newman* v. *Alabama* and *Pugh* v. *Locke*, testimony in Johnson's court established that prisoners were sleeping on hallway floors and under urinals, that as many as 200 men were using a single toilet, and that untrained inmates were acting as X-ray technicians and even performing minor surgery.

In 1975, the State admitted in open court that conditions in the prisons violated the Eighth Amendment provision against cruel and unusual punishment, and Johnson issued an intricately detailed order describing how the prisons were to be administered in the future; for prisoners, the order insisted upon a change of bed linen once a week, three nutritious meals a day, a meaningful job and a chance to study basic education courses.

George Wallace, who was running for president at the time, accused Johnson of creating a "hotel atmosphere" in the Alabama prison system and suggested that "a vote for George Wallace might give a political barbed-wire enema to some federal judges." It was one of the few times Johnson allowed himself a response. "The elimination of conditions that will permit maggots in a patient's wounds for over a month before his death does not constitute the creation of a hotel atmosphere. The elimination of physical and mental indignities, such as the rape of a retarded minor four times in one night, with the prison officials stating to the victim that there was nothing that they could do, will not be creating a hotel atmosphere."

In 1971, a class-action suit *(Wyatt* v. *Stickney)* was brought before Johnson's court in behalf of the involuntarily confined patients in Alabama's mental institutions; it demonstrated a pattern of abuse and neglect even more shocking than in the state's prisons. The hospitals were grossly overcrowded, often needlessly so: the evidence showed that in one hospital, 70 percent of the patients never should have been committed to begin with. The hospitals had become, in Johnson's words, "invisible depositories for the eccentric, those with aberrational behavior or those whose families would simply rather not be bothered." There were so many examples of patients who had been killed or severely injured by other patients that the Judge had to issue emergency orders to protect the lives of inmates. Sometimes the treatment from trained authorities was no better: one patient was kept in a straitjacket for nine years to keep him from sucking his hands and fingers.

Johnson dropped church when people started moving to different pews when he sat down

Johnson ruled that patients committed to the hospitals "have a constitutional right to receive such treatment as will give each of them a reasonable opportunity to be cured or to improve his or her mental condition." He then issued 74 guidelines for attaining a constitutionally adequate level of treatment. Of all his decisions, Johnson considers it his most important.

Morris Dees, the principal fund raiser for the presidential campaigns of both George McGovern and Jimmy Carter, founded the Southern Poverty Law Center in Montgomery in part because that's where Johnson sat. But Dees doesn't always like the way Johnson rules. "Contrary to what a lot of people think, he's been on the 'wrong side'—by that, I mean he's been reversed by a higher court—on a lot of cases," says Dees. "Johnson's no trail blazer at making new law, but he's innovative in applying existing law."

Attorney Albert Copeland agrees. "It's always amused me that they treat him as a great libertarian. Really, he has a conservative view of the law. In the nuts and bolts of law, such as in the rules of evidence, I find him to be restrictive. Also, if I were the plaintiff in a federal tort claims case, I would prefer almost any other district judge in Alabama. He's just tough when it comes to handing out federal money." ("Hell, he acts like it comes out of his own pocket," says his friend Ray Jenkins, editor of the Montgomery *Advertiser*.) Johnson still is one of the few federal judges to have neither a Federal Telecommunications System nor a WATS line; when he makes a call, it's usually collect.

The Judge has had to live with the consequences of 23 years of making unpopular decisions. Those consequences have included the bombing of his mother's home, innumerable death threats, a federal guard on him at all times, the loss on two occasions of a widely anticipated appointment to the Supreme Court because of a vengeful Alabama congressional delegation, and of course a cold shoulder from Montgomery society.

The Johnsons live in an integrated

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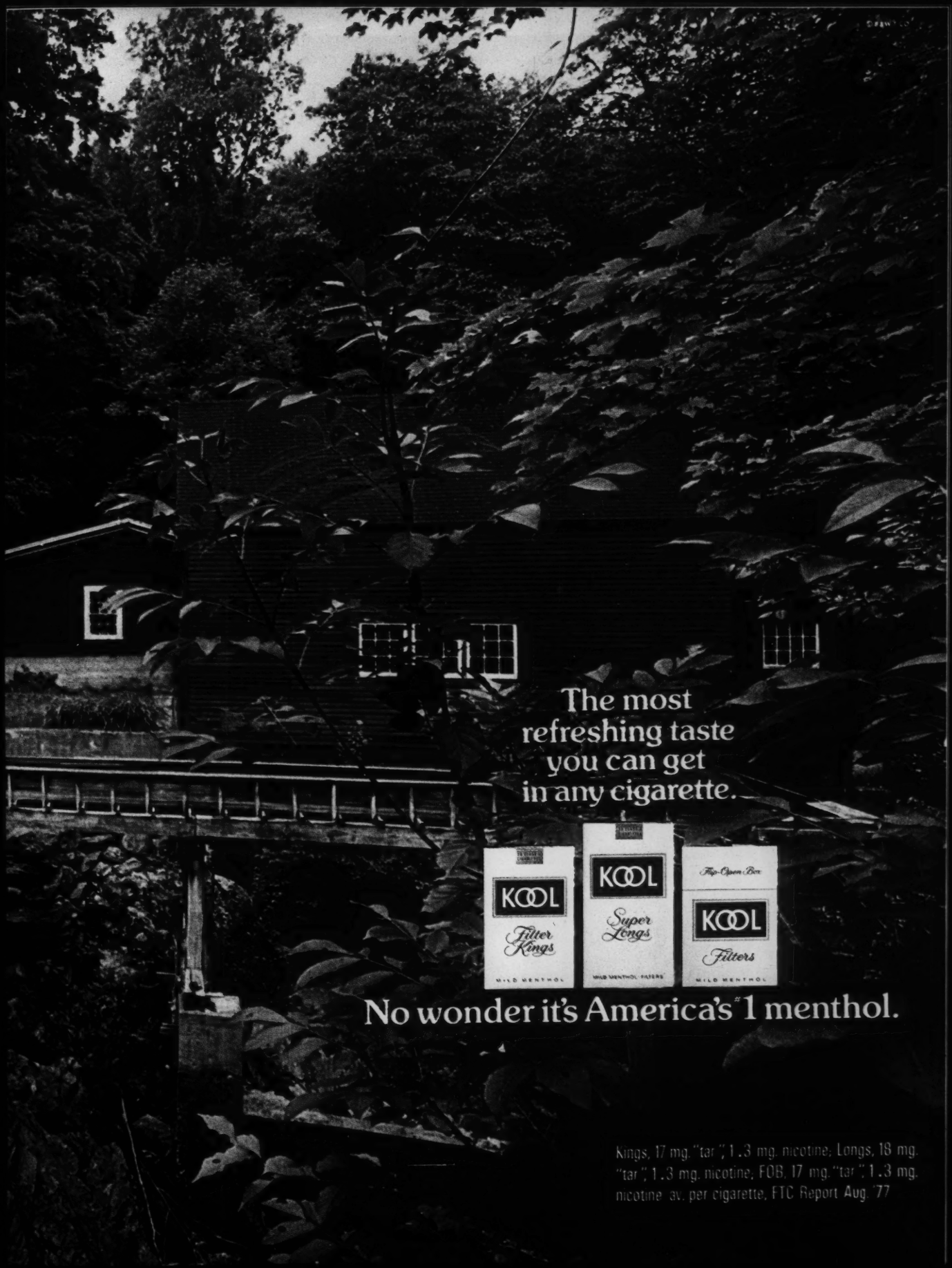
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neighborhood about three miles from the courthouse, which over the years has become a very protected enclave. After a cross was burned into Johnson's front yard following his decision in the 1955 bus boycott case, off-duty policemen hired by the U.S. government have parked every night in front of the Johnsons' home, which is itself overseen by a pair of mulish great Danes that Judge adores and his friends avoid. However, Johnson never took a gun to bed at night, the way some federal judges did. "The only weapon I have in my house is a knife I use to slice bread with," he says. "Ruth and I have never been afraid in Montgomery, Alabama."

Ruth Johnson is another Winston County product, a "sweet thang," all right, but with her own ambitions and a sense of rightness that has challenged her husband at every step. They married in their late teens, and while Frank studied law she became a teacher. When he got drafted, she joined the WAVEs (she outranked him all during the war); when he became a federal judge, she went back to school and got a Master's degree in Library Science from Alabama State, Montgomery's black college, and then went to work for the public schools that Judge had integrated. "He's fortunate and so am I that we both have the same ideals," she says.

Ruth and her husband seldom were invited to parties; Judge resigned from the all-white country club, gave up teaching Sunday School at the First Baptist Church when nobody came, and finally dropped church altogether when people started moving to different pews when he and Ruth sat down.

Such treatment was incited partly by vituperative newspaper articles but mostly by George Wallace, who discovered that the fear and fanaticism that greeted federally mandated integration plans could be refined and manipulated into a vast, collective hatred of a solitary, intransigent judge, one whom Wallace called "a low-down, carpetbaggin', scalawaggin', race-mixin' liar."

And it didn't stop there. Johnson's only child, Johnny, was harassed in the public schools, not only by his classmates but sometimes also by his teachers. There were threats on his life as well. Finally Judge Johnson enrolled his son in Montgomery Academy, a private school, a fact that Wallace quickly milked in his speeches, and then teased into a small incident when he sent state agents into the school to investigate "Communist overtones."

"Frank's paid a lot for his decisions," says Judge Lecil Gray, a close friend of the Johnsons, who, as probate judge of Walker County, handled their adoption of Johnny in 1948. "One thing that people don't understand is the sadness and sorrow Frank has had to bear. The impression is that he's sort of a loner—and

PHOTOGRAPH BY DAVID BURNETT/CONTACT

Johnson's stage: Rock in the court

he is, a little bit. But that was brought on by his reception after he got on the bench. The truth is that he loves people and he likes to be liked. But he's sort of indicated that he doesn't give a damn what you think."

Judge Gray is one of Johnson's fishing partners, a small group of *non compos mentis* sportsmen for whom fishing is akin to Holy War. Johnson likes a challenge; he fishes the Tennessee River for smallmouth bass and the Gulf around Destin, Florida, for speckled trout. "I pick my fishing companions very selectively," he says. "That's the only opportunity I have to let my hair down."

Frank Johnson and Lecil Gray have been fishing together for 30 years, ever since Frank went to Jasper, Alabama, to practice law after the war. At that time Gray was just "an old country probate judge and gutter politician," as he describes himself, a short fat man constructed on the Senator Foghorn model, with a voice like a wooden hull rubbing on a gravel bottom. Now he is an insurance executive in Tuscaloosa and chairman of the Human Rights Committee that Johnson established after he took charge of the mental hospitals. Judge Gray keeps his fishing rods in his office, right next to the complete works of Mark Twain.

"Frank Johnson is a man of great moral virtues," says Gray, "except where it comes to fishing. Then he will steal your fish, lie about where he caught them, send you off in the wrong direction, and he's not above spiking your hole. Oh, he's a good fisherman, all right. He'll put the hat on you quick."

"Frank and I used to fish at Sardis Lake in Mississippi," Judge Gray recalls. "One time the trip got off to a particularly early start; we had left after work with G.L. Byars, an insurance man in Jasper, and Jack Hall, who ran a sporting goods store, and we got to Hurricane Landing about 1:30 in the morning. We were all sitting around a gas station drinking coffee and waiting for dawn when Frank says, 'Boys, I'll tell you what. We're all tired. Let's go over to that hotel at Oxford and get a room. We can sleep for about three hours.' 'Oh, hell no, Frank,' we said. 'Once we get up in that sack and go to sleep we'll never get up. Let's just go down to the landing and sleep in the car.'

"Well, Frank's real bossy when he's fishing. He calls the Oxford Inn and orders a couple of rooms, then herds us off to the car, but before we go I tell him I gotta go to the bathroom and I slip off and call the Oxford Inn.

"This old black man answers the phone. I say, 'Did Frank Johnson just call you?'

" 'Yassuh, he did.'

" 'Poor fellow,' I say, 'he just can't help it. Injured in the war, you know. Lost control of his bowels. That's right—whenever old Frank goes to sleep he just can't hold his movements . . .'

"Well, we got to the Oxford Inn and Frank bounds out of the car. 'I'm Frank Johnson,' he tells the clerk. 'Mr. Johnson, I'm *sorry*,' this old fellow says, 'I *thought* I had some rooms for you, but the peoples that was *'posed* to check out ain't gonna.' Frank's real huffy. We finally did get him out of there and drove back to Hurricane Landing. The rest of us slept in the car, but Frank just sat there mumbling about his 'reservations.' "

Gray pauses to light a cigarette. His big, wrinkled, sallow-tan face is like a broken-in catcher's mitt. He sticks the cigarette into the center of it. "Now, G.L. Byars is not reliable," he continues. "He fished with Frank that day and told him what I'd done. But Frank never said a word.

"Several weeks later I went back to fish Lake Sardis alone. I got there real early and decided to get some winks so I drove over to the Oxford Inn and asked for a room. This same old black fellow was behind the desk. 'I just want it for three or four hours,' I said, and signed the card, 'Judge Lecil Gray, Jasper, Alabama.'

" 'Judge *Gray*?' he says, 'I made a mistake! I thought these other folks checked out . . .'

" 'Look, fellow. Goddammit. You just told me you had a room. Now haven't you got some place I can get a little sleep?'

" 'I ain't got *no* place for you, Judge,' he says, and tears up my card.

"It was a long time before I found out that Frank Johnson had gone back to the Oxford Inn before me, registered in my

name, then crapped in the bed and went fishing.

"I was," Lecil says in a baleful key, "forever banned from the Oxford Inn."

Winston County, Alabama, is thin, rocky soil, never good enough to support slavery, so when the Democratic Party became the party of slavery and secession, most folks in Winston County became Republican; they even tried to secede from the Confederacy and form the "Free State of Winston," which is how it is still defiantly advertised in faded signs on gray weathered barns. People in Winston fought on both sides in the war, and even now mothers will keep their children indoors on election day, lest they be unalterably influenced by a stray bullet or a foreign attitude.

Frank Johnson puts a lot of stock in having grown up in Winston County; he thinks it helped to make him an independent thinker and developed his intuitive feeling for justice. That may be why so often he has reached back to Winston County for friends and employees. "People that were born and raised in the section I come from grew up with a sense of true values, as opposed to artificial values," he explains. "One value that I guess is very important as far as my profession as a U.S. judge is that you evaluate and accept or reject people for what they are, and not for what their people were before them, or how much wealth they had available to them."

Johnson's father, Frank Sr., was a member of that despised class of office holders in the South known as "post-office Republicans"—men whose careers advanced and retreated with the fortunes of the national GOP. He served as postmaster in Haleyville, Alabama, under Harding, Coolidge and Hoover; when the New Deal came to power and the post offices turned Democrat, Frank Sr. ran successfully for probate judge of Winston County. In Alabama, the powers of probate judge include disposition of estates, the recording of deeds, and the sale of marriage licenses; but its chief attraction to local politicians (who don't need a law degree to hold the office) is the cheap acquisition of the title of judge in a state where doctors, coaches, retired military officers and "judges" of every stripe populate the power elite. "Old Judge," as Johnson's father is now remembered in Winston County, later represented his district as the only Republican in the Alabama legislature (a seat that eventually was lost to the Democrats in Young Judge's reapportionment plan).

Winston County is the kind of place that people spend the first part of their lives trying to leave, and the remainder talking about going home to. Frank Johnson's ticket out of backwoods Alabama came while he was still in high school. "I wrecked two of my father's automobiles

PHOTOGRAPH BY FRED WARD/BLACK STAR

The "Guvnah": "Segregation forever!"

about 1932–33," he recalls. "With the first car he didn't say anything; he went ahead and got it fixed. But the frame was bent, and he had to trade it in six months later. Got a brand new Chevrolet, and he wouldn't let me use it for a long time. Finally, he did, and the first time I drove it I turned it over. It was a freak kind of accident. I'll never forget what my father said then. He said, 'Son, when are you ready to go?'

" 'Go where, father?'

" 'Gulf Coast Military Academy.' "

That began Frank Johnson's military career. It concluded with a Bronze Star and two Purple Hearts earned in Italy and France.

Johnson describes his father as "an extrovert but of the pleasant type." Old Judge is remembered as a gourmandizing, tale-spinning Southern sensualist—and as one of the best bird hunters in the state; when friends describe Johnson after-hours or on a fishing trip, they say he's a lot like his father.

When he's in court, however, the comparisons are always with his mother, a stern and resolute lady named Alabama Long Johnson, who handled the discipline of her seven children; she would make them cut their own switches, Johnson remembers, "and if they weren't big enough she'd make us cut another one." When her house was bombed in 1967—she was a widow by then, living in Montgomery, and when it happened she was sitting upstairs with her poodle in her lap watching TV—neighbors described her as the calmest person on the block. "If they meant to scare ole Alabama," one of her admirers remarked, "they gonna have to try something more drastic."

Johnson has his mother's temper, but not her appetite for punishment. "I believe in bringing defendants for a speedy trial, and if they're guilty I'll impose sentence right away," Johnson explains, "but I do not believe in severe sentences. I believe in the certainty of justice, but not in the severity."

Johnson's sentences usually are near or below the national average. His law clerks say that the principal reason for Johnson's moderate sentences is that he is one of the very few U.S. judges who still will talk privately to any defendant or his family before making a decision. He tends to be more lenient than average when it comes to "victimless" crimes, and harsher than average on white-collar crimes.

Judge has put away a number of public officials for one crime or another, but the one most people remember is State Senator Eugene "Crum" Foshee, whom Johnson sentenced to three years in a check kiting (mail fraud) case. In the opinion of Tom Christopher, dean of the Alabama Law School, no other judge in the state would have sent that senator to jail. "The fact that he was a state senator worked both ways," says Johnson. "He was a public official, he was educated, and he occupied a position of trust. To me a man like that—you've got to give him a sentence. You can't sit at this desk and look at the mothers and fathers who come in here, and then send the ham stealers to the penitentiary and put the state senators on probation."

Among law enforcement officers Johnson's sentences sometimes have seemed a little whimsical. Once a team of Treasury agents who had spent months setting up a bust of a football gambling operation were scalded by Johnson for wasting the taxpayers' money. Another time the government got a conviction of a moonshiner who ran a sanitary operation in north Alabama; the prosecutor asked for a prison sentence but the judge put the fellow on probation. "A man with an all-copper still can't be all bad," the Judge explained.

"Frank's code of what's right and wrong was very much molded by his upbringing in Winston County," notes Lecil Gray. "All those people in the Free State of Winston have a strong sense of frontier justice. They believe that there are more reasons to kill a man than you might find written in the law books.

"People in Montgomery were brought up under different circumstances. What they considered right and wrong differed from Winston County. Such as in racial matters: people in Winston felt that a black man's home was his castle, too, but they also felt that they had a right to be left alone by blacks. For years, there was a sign on the county line, 'Nigger, Don't Let the Sun Set on You Here'—and yet on the other side of that line a black man felt he had pretty

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The one category in which Johnson's sentences shatter the national average is narcotics offenses. From 1973 to 1976, Johnson's average sentence in hard-drug cases was 70.5 months, compared with a national average of 49.8 months. (Johnson had very few marijuana cases during that period, but his sentences in those cases were also more stringent than average.) The FBI does not have jurisdiction over drug cases (Hoover always shirked it, with the consequence that the Drug Enforcement Agency was created), but some of Judge's friends think he'll try for the authority to go after pushers, and if he gets it, he'll be ruthless.

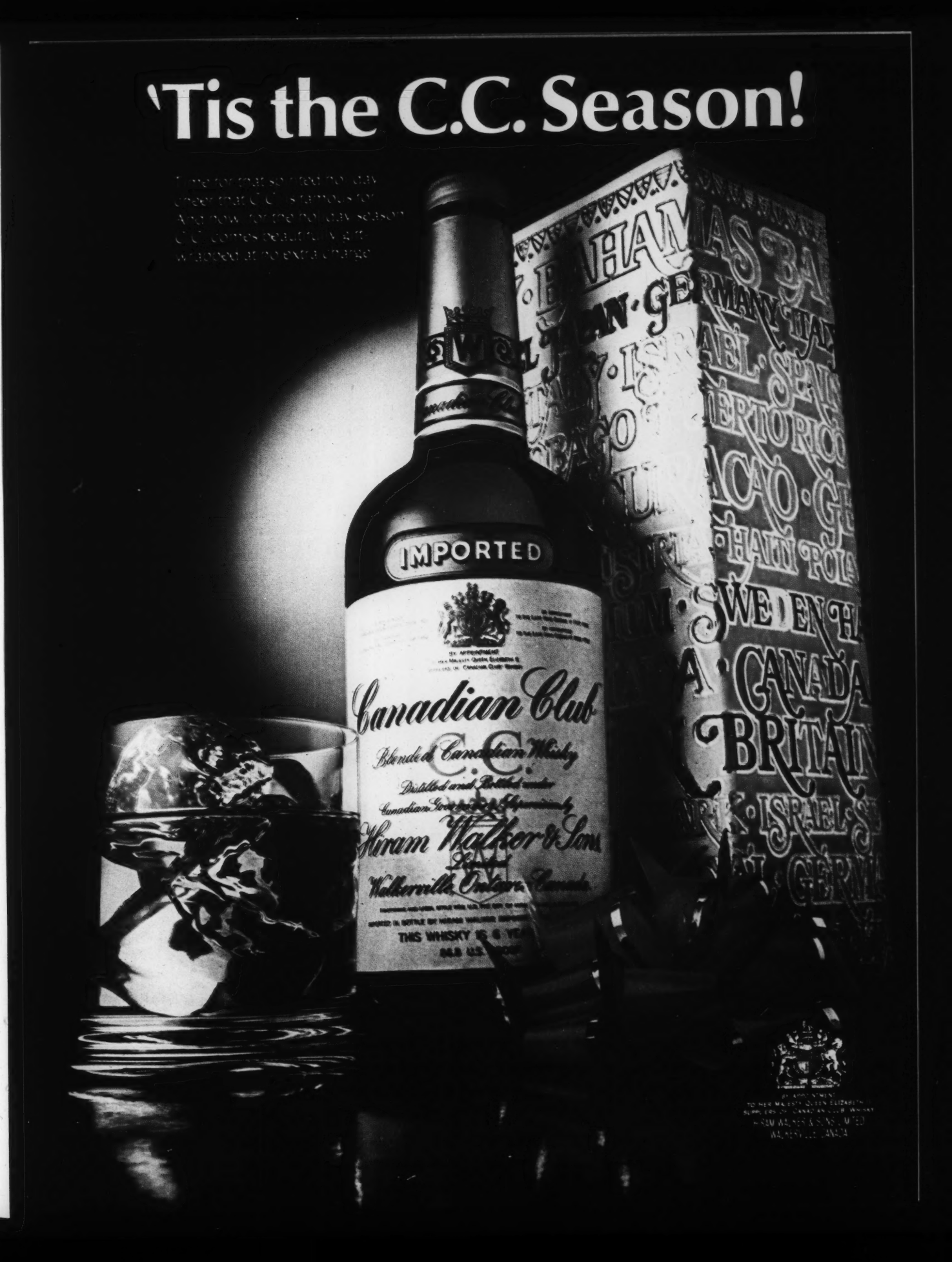
Johnson has his mother's temper but not her appetite for punishment

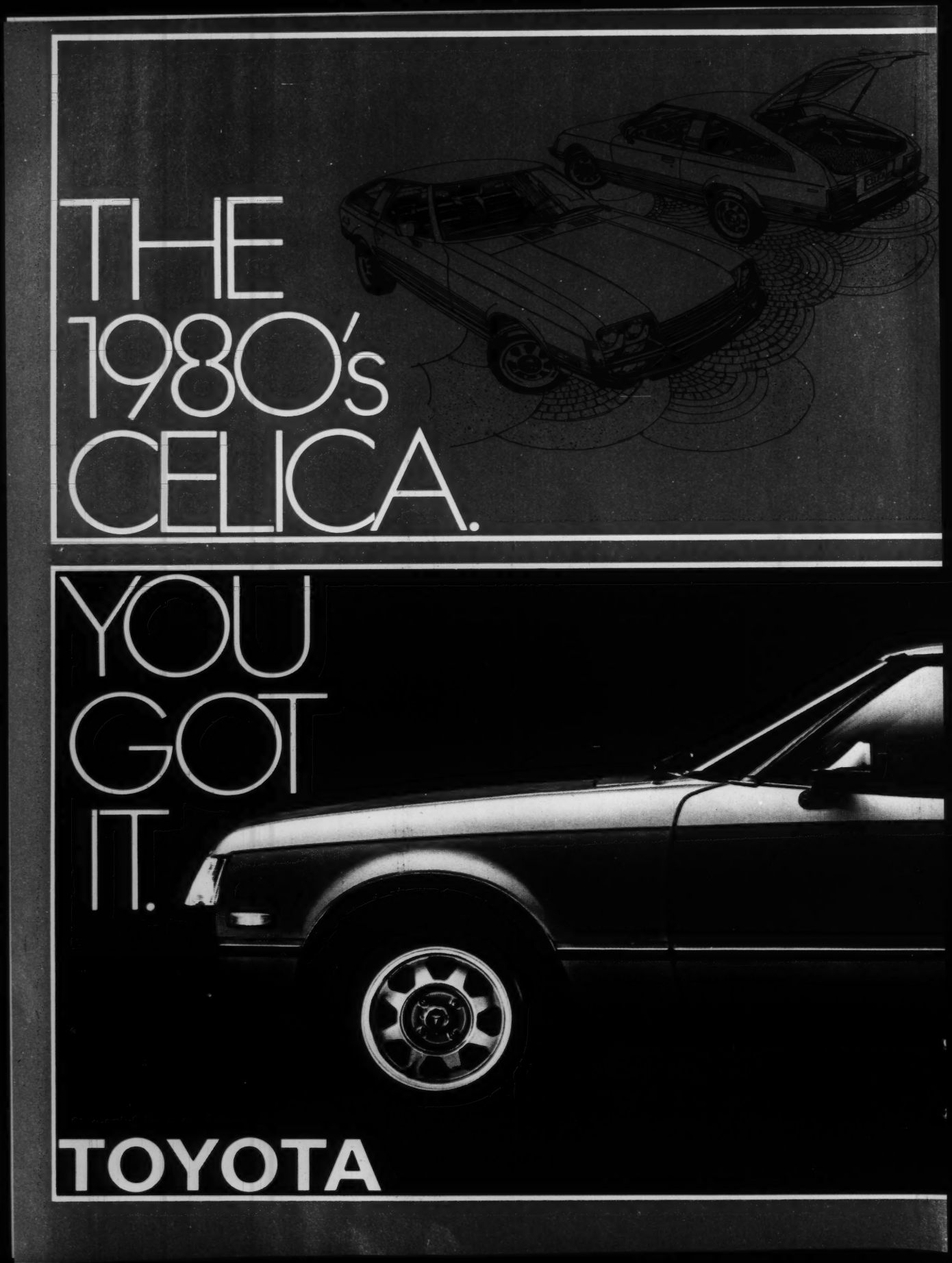
Johnson's attitude toward drugs is one shaped by bitter personal experience. His younger brother, Wallace Johnson, was an Alabama lawyer who became corrupted, in Johnson's view, by his addiction to drugs. Wallace was the darling of the entire family and a special favorite of his father, and after he began to get into trouble Old Judge did everything possible to save him. "The last time Wallace got in trouble," recalls one friend, "Frank told his daddy, 'You just can't get him out of it anymore.' The old man turned himself into the VA hospital. He wasn't sick, he just couldn't face Wallace. Then he did get sick. He got worse. He willed himself to die. I saw Wallace at his funeral, handcuffed to a prison guard. If you think that's not tough on people . . ." Following the funeral Wallace was returned to Texas, to serve time for car theft.

After Frank Jr. was already on the bench, Wallace came to Montgomery to practice; he made the rounds of the federal prisoners and let them know who his brother was. It didn't take long for him to begin finding clients. When Johnson heard what was happening he barred Wallace from ever practicing in his court. "He never tried a case before me," Johnson says. "I shot it down before it ever got off the ground—if it was designed to get off the ground."

Drugs led to family tragedy again in the next generation when Johnson's own son, Johnny, became an addict. "Johnny happened to be a little too sensitive and too emotionally labile," the Johnsons' family doctor and close friend, Dr. Jack Kirschenfeld, explains. "He never seemed to find himself. He tried law, he learned to fly—he even did some crop-dusting. He worked in the Attorney General's office and dabbled in state politics. But he never stuck to anything too long.

'Tis the C.C. Season!

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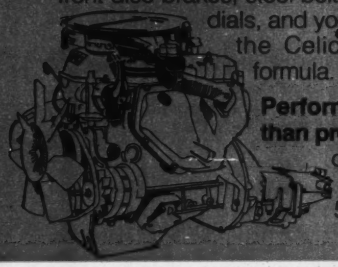

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* * * *

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He was restless, couldn't quite hit his stride."

Judge's long efforts to wean his son from drugs ended in failure in 1975 when Johnny committed suicide in the Johnsons' home. Many of Judge's friends blamed Montgomery for what happened, but the Judge always blamed drugs. "It did something to Frank real hard and real deep," says Gray. "He once said to me, 'How would you like to grow up with a father as controversial as Frank Johnson?'"

A two-week case in front of Johnson is like a month before any other judge

Judge now rejects drugs altogether. "He won't take anything stronger than an aspirin," says his doctor. He even refused pain-killers after his surgery, although the usual regimen after a major operation requires at least four days on narcotics and another week on lesser drugs, such as codeine.

Soon after Johnny's death the son of an old ally appeared in Montgomery. "I went to Alabama to write originally about George Wallace for my Harvard B.A. thesis," explains Bobby Kennedy Jr., whose father was Attorney General during the crucial years of Johnson's desegregation orders. "I soon realized that Frank Johnson was really the guy holding the reins in the state. I knew of his early decisions—the bus boycott, the Freedom Riders—but I had no idea how important he was. I really only had a vague idea of what I wanted to do when I came to Alabama; I was looking for some kind of focus, and he provided it."

Kennedy spent a year in Alabama, and his thesis became a book that will be published by Putnam next spring. Peter Kaplan roomed with Kennedy for part of that year. "I don't know whether Bobby walked into the void created when Johnny died," he says, "but the relationship became really very close. In natural man-type ways, Bobby and the Judge were very much alike. Each had an instinctual sense of the out-of-doors. They were both flinty-eyed and laconic. The chemistry was remarkable."

Kennedy discourages any father-son comparison. "People see what they want to see. I respect Judge as much as any man I've ever met, and I think he enjoyed me, but I certainly never thought about it in those terms.

"I sort of learned about him a little at a time, and that's basically how I wrote about him. He's not the type of guy who can sit still. Even when he goes home he's always working. He works in the garden or he'll build a clock; all the wood paneling in his home is his work, so is the

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Froilan lives in the highlands of Guatemala in a one-room hut with dirt floors and no sanitary facilities. Labor there is so cheap that, for men like Froilan's father, hard work and long hours still mean a life of poverty. But now life is changing for Froilan.

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wood floor. Even when he goes fishing it's hard work; you work up a sweat fishing with him for speckled trout. He's very serious about that, and he doesn't like anybody not to be serious. He doesn't like anybody to catch a bigger fish than he does, either." Once, as a favor, Judge allowed Kennedy to fish with a special lure—"a pink thing, looked like a shrimp, and it made a noise when it hit the water," Kennedy remembers. While Johnson was using live bait and filling up the boat with trout, Kennedy was having no luck with his artificial shrimp. "What's the secret?" he asked in exasperation. "You have to rub real shrimp on it," Judge advised.

They had been friends, Frank Johnson and George Wallace, or at least friendly rivals at the University of Alabama. As undergraduates, Johnson encouraged Wallace's first political efforts. "I supported George when he ran for president of the Cotillion Club," Johnson says. "It was the only job that paid any money, and George really needed it. He ran three times as an independent, against the fraternity candidates, and I supported him all three times." In law school at Alabama, Wallace was known as the most outspoken liberal on campus—a great fan of the New Deal—and Johnson as the most conservative. Often George would show up at Frank and Ruth's apartment around dinner time, and through the meal discuss philosophy and politics. Frank would bait him, taking up for the Alabama Power Company, for instance, against the TVA, and George would groan through a second helping. Even then Wallace was talking about what he would do when he got to be "guvnah."

In his first gubernatorial campaign in 1958, Wallace ran against John Patterson, who was that uniquely Alabamian political figure: a reform candidate with Klan support. Wallace issued a half-hearted denouncement of the Klan and wound up with the unwelcome endorsement of the NAACP.

At the time, Wallace was the circuit judge of Barbour and Bullock counties; in the campaign he called himself "The Fighting Judge," and the objects of his belligerence were "federal snoopers"—the U.S. Civil Rights Commission, in other words, which had been seizing voting records in selected counties in the South to force compliance with new voter registration laws. Wallace had hired Minnie Pearl to give him a draw on the stump, and the highlight of every speech came when the Fighting Judge declared: "Now, I'm a *judge*"—he'd pause to let the majesty of the office sink in—"and if those federal snoopers ever come around Barbour County they'll be singing this song," and then Minnie Pearl would break out singing "I'm in the Jailhouse Now." The woolhats would

PHOTOGRAPH BY BRUCE DAVIDSON/MAGNUM

Selma to Montgomery: King en route to a Nobel Prize and martyrdom

whoop and cheer, and Wallace first heard the rage and resentment that he would later cultivate to become the most powerful political figure in Alabama history. Patterson won in a runoff, and afterward Wallace told his cronies that he never would be out-niggered again.

Johnson, said Wallace, was "a low-down, carpetbaggin', scalawaggin', race-mixin' liar"

Soon after the election the federal snoopers took up the challenge that Wallace had been offering all during the campaign: they demanded the voting records of Barbour and Bullock counties. By then, Wallace could hardly have afforded to turn over the records even if he'd wanted to; his political career would have been ruined. On the other hand, a good show of resistance might mean the difference between victory and defeat in the next election. He declared that if any agent of the "evil Civil Rights Commission" came to Barbour County, "he will be locked up." The feds then filed criminal contempt charges against Wallace in Frank Johnson's court.

Wallace was in a tight spot. He could save face by calling his grand jurors together and turning over the records to them, and they could then surrender the documents to the Commission. Nonetheless, he still had to appear at the hearing in Frank Johnson's court.

The night before the hearing Wallace decided to approach Johnson privately. A mutual friend from law school, Glen Curlee, set up the meeting in Johnson's home. Around 11:00 that evening there was a knock on Johnson's front door; he opened the door and George was standing outside with his coat over his head. "Frank, looks like I got my ass in a crack," Wallace said as he came in.

"Lower your voice," Johnson warned. "Mrs. Johnson is in hearing."

They sat at the kitchen table and Johnson poured coffee. "Well," said Wallace, "the main reason I came, Judge, is that I wanted to know, if I defied the court, would you give me a week or two in jail over at Maxwell Air Force Base."

Johnson didn't answer.

"Judge," Wallace continued, "if I spent a week, or even 30 days in jail for defying the court, I could walk into office. But if you put my ass in jail for a year or two, they'll forget about the Fighting Judge. It'd kill mama and my wife both."

"If you don't turn over those records, George," said Johnson, "I'll throw the book at you."

Wallace went home that night believing that if he continued to withhold the voting records from the Civil Rights Commission he'd be moldering in jail long after the filing deadline for the next gubernatorial race. He called Seymore Trammell, then the solicitor in Wallace's court, and told him to assemble the grand jurors and give them the records. All that night the sheriff was waking up grand jurors, and by 10:00 the next morning, when Wallace entered Frank Johnson's courtroom, the Civil Rights Commission had the records in hand.

That's when Wallace told his lawyers what he'd done. "I had to do it," he said. "I couldn't afford to spend a year in jail. He said he'd throw the book at me."

"George," they told him, "the *maximum* penalty he could have given you in this case is 30 days!"

Wallace then tried to plead guilty to the original contempt charge, but Johnson dismissed it, saying that "Even though it was accomplished by means of a subterfuge, George C. Wallace did comply with the order of this court. . . . If these devious means were used for political purposes, then this court refuses to allow its authority and dignity to be bent and swayed by such politically generated whirlwinds."

Being found innocent was about the worst thing that could have happened to the Fighting Judge. After the hearing Wallace was woebegone. He cornered newsmen and tried to explain that he really *was* guilty; the next day the Montgomery *Advertiser* called Wallace,

PHOTOGRAPH BY DAVID BURNETT/CONTACT

Judge: Johnson's decisions once made him the most hated white man in the South

"probably the most distressed acquitted man ever to appear before the court."

"It broke George's heart," Lecil Gray recalls. "I ran into him at the Elite Cafe the next day. He said, 'Frank should have told me where I stood. He tried to cut my damn spurs off. Now I'm going to have to defy the law.'"

According to Gray, Frank told his own version of the incident one evening over dinner at a fishing cottage on Lake Martin. "He was laughing," Lecil remembers. "He thought it was a big damn joke that a man who was a judge wouldn't know what the sentence was. I said, 'Frank, you shouldn't have done it. You mistreated George. Now he's going to have to make an issue out of you in the next campaign. He's got no choice, he's got to attack the federal judges. And what's more, you can't answer back. He's going to walk over your busted ass into the governor's office.'"

"I'll never forget what Ruth said," Gray recalls. "She said, 'Not *little George*!'"

"I've known Frank Johnson since school days," Wallace stated when Johnson's appointment as the director of the FBI was announced last August. "We had our differences but I have never considered them personal. He is a hard worker and I wish him the greatest of success in this new undertaking on behalf of the people of this country."

The first time Attorney General Griffin Bell offered Frank Johnson the job as head of the FBI during the Carter transition, Johnson refused to consider it. The next job Bell offered Johnson was that of Deputy Attorney General. This time Johnson drove over to Atlanta to meet Bell in his old law offices. They had known each other before; as a judge on the U.S. Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals, Bell often had ruled on Johnson's decisions. "I thought he was going to take it," Bell recalls. "We had a good long talk about it. He'd been a judge a good while and I got the feeling he might want to do something different. His problem then was that his mother was sick and he didn't want to leave her. Also, he'd have to give up his pension. That's a real consideration for a judge. I told him that when John Wesley died, all he left behind was a silver spoon and the Methodist Church."

Johnson is the classic hero in a time of anti-heroes

There was one other consideration that Johnson didn't mention to Bell, which is his fear of flying. Johnson confesses to "a slight uneasiness, not a fear," but his wife says, "He's scared to death of flying. It's an extreme fear, and I think it has to do with his not being able to control that plane." Ordinarily, when Judge has to travel long distances, he will drive; when he travels to Washington he drives to Atlanta and rides the train.

Last January, President Carter appointed a search committee to produce candidates for the FBI post, but four months and 48 candidates later the committee hadn't satisfied either Bell or Carter. In August of this year, Johnson contacted a former clerk of his, Frances "Kelley" Green, who was working in the Justice Department, and let her know that he had reconsidered the appointment to the FBI.

"At that time I was working on a list of six names, and none of those struck me as the right person," says Bell. "That person had to be decisive, smart, a great leader, who's got a background that would cause people outside the Bureau to respect him, and the people inside the Bureau to be proud. Frank Johnson is almost the perfect person to run the Bureau. I wanted to interview him again, so I met him down in Georgia at this Holiday Inn on I-85, about three or four miles from Newnan. We met in a dining room on a Sunday, and not a soul in the place recognized either of us. Judge Johnson said he'd decided he had about ten more good years left, but there was some doubt about how he'd function—he'd been a judge a long time, and judges live a sheltered life, a cloistered life.

"As head of the FBI everything you do or say must be closely watched. You have to learn to deal with bureaucracy, with the Congress, with the media. I hope he'll be a good manager; I know he's a man of the law. Frank Johnson's been a good judge, but I think he was born to head the FBI."●

Eleven questions to ask yourself before buying a 35mm SLR.

Knowing what to look for now in a 35mm SLR can save you money and prevent problems later on.

1. How much camera do I need? Most manufacturers, including Minolta, offer a tempting array of features. Like interchangeable finders and focusing screens, motorized film winding, self-timers and multiple-exposure capability. If you'll be using them, fine. If not, save yourself some money by cutting out the frills.

2. Is match-needle or electronic auto-exposure control best? Minolta offers both, so our only concern is that you get what's best for you.

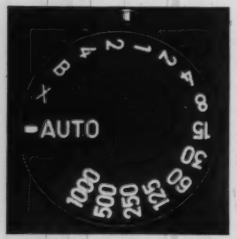
Generally a match-needle camera costs less. To set exposure, you line up two needles in the viewfinder. It's easy, fast and accurate, but you do the work. Minolta SR-T match-needle cameras offer a wide variety of features and prices.

Minolta's newest 35mm SLR's have electronically controlled shutter speeds. So even if the light changes the instant before you shoot, the camera will set itself for correct exposure. Among Minolta's electronic SLR's, you'll find features like interchangeable viewfinders and screens, shutter speeds to 1/2000th of a second and multiple-exposure capability.

3. What should I look for in the viewfinder? First of all, a bright image. So you can see clearly and focus easily. Judge this by comparing several brands under the same light conditions.

Then, exposure information. The more the viewfinder shows, the more you know about how the camera is taking the picture. If this means a lot to you, pay the extra cost. If not, save on a simpler camera.

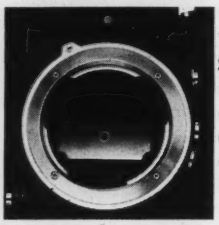
The important thing about Minolta SLR's is that in every single one, you can compose, focus, set exposure and shoot without ever looking away from the viewfinder. So you won't miss shots of even the fastest-moving subjects.



4. What range of shutter speeds do I need? Most picture taking is done at speeds between 1/60th and 1/500th of a second. But to stop very fast action, higher speeds are handy to have. And slower speeds are useful for available-light shooting and spectacular night shots. Depending on the Minolta model, you can get speeds as fast as 1/2000th of a second and as slow as 16 seconds.

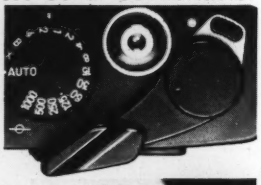
5. What is a "fast" lens, and do I need one? The more light a lens lets in, the "faster" it is. Faster lenses like an f/1.2 or f/1.4 are more expensive, but nice to have if you do a lot of shooting in dim light.

6. Why is the lens system important? Interchangeable lenses let your camera grow with you. Minolta offers almost 40, from a 7.5mm "fisheye" to a 1600mm super-telephoto. Minolta makes all their own lenses to insure compatibility with Minolta cameras.



7. How fast can I change lenses? You shouldn't have to miss shots. So Minolta developed and patented a bayonet mount that lets you change lenses with less than a quarter turn. And unlike other bayonet mounts, Minolta's doesn't require you to realign f/stops afterwards.

8. How should the camera feel? Solid. Comfortable. Not too big, not too small. Your fingers should fall naturally into place on the controls. Advance the film wind lever. If it feels gritty or rough now, how will it feel after a couple of thousand shots?



9. How should it sound? Press the shutter button. Noisiness means either vibration or inadequate damping of moving parts. Or both. The newest Minolta shutters are a joy to hear because you almost can't hear them at all.

10. How do I judge craftsmanship? Compare. Everything should be tucked in neatly. Finishes should be even and unmarred. No machining marks should be visible, even inside the camera.

11. What is the camera's reputation? Be sure to ask friends about Minolta. Since it's the best-selling imported camera brand in the U.S., chances are someone you know owns one.

And if you'd like literature on Minolta 35mm SLR's, write to Minolta Corp., 101 Williams Drive, Ramsey, N.J. 07446. In Canada: Minolta Camera (Canada), Inc., Ont.

Minolta

The more you know about cameras, the more you'll want a Minolta.

First Prize: Maryjane Chewning, Richmond, Virginia

WE GOT SUNSETS

The first annual *New Times* Photo Contest proved a visual feast. From dog-eared snapshots of out-of-focus bikinied girlfriends, to lush and magnificently mounted landscapes, the 3,743 entrees provided us a gallery of American life as rich as any Altman movie.

We got nudes and dudes, musicians, beauticians, drunks, punks and hunks. We got Shriners, Klansmen, Moonies, Nazis; Elvis, Anita, Sissy and Jimmy. Floods and fires, flowers and spires. Heroes. Villains. Births. Deaths. Wildlife—and wild life. More cats than dogs, more kids than cats, and lovers of every persuasion.

And we got sunsets, scores and scores of sunsets. One of them—Maryjane Chewning's photograph of a magic march up the great dunes of Nags Head, North Carolina (above)—so took our fancy that it won the contest (and the $1,000 first prize). Like Chewning's hang gliders, Crawford Barton's San Francisco street scene (2nd prize), Rocky Weldon's mud-fest at Watkins Glen (3rd) and Larry True's powerful study of a California home birth (4th) precisely fit the contest's new times theme.

Hundreds of entries did *not* especially reveal "the way we are, circa 1977," but we found a few of these so compelling that we are running them, honorably mentioned, anyway; Martin Goldman's haunting portrait of an elderly mother and son is a stand-out example.

Our one regret about the contest is that there isn't the space to publish many more of the photos we received, or even to publish them all. Taken together, they revealed more about our readers than any subscriber study ever could: exuberant, involved, loving, caring, amused, alert, *alive*—we got the picture.

Second Prize: Crawford Barton, San Francisco, California

Honorable Mention: Martin Goldman,
Stowe, Vermont

Honorable Mention: Dean Abramson,
Syracuse, New York

Honorable Mention: Michos Tzovaras,
New York, New York

Third Prize: Rocky Weldon, New York, New York

Fourth Prize: Larry True, Sacramento, California

Honorable Mention: Shirley Drevich,
Cambridge, Massachusetts

Honorable Mention: Robert Cantius,
Edgartown, Massachusetts

Honorable Mention: Grant Colling, Jamestown, North Dakota

Honorable Mention: Richard Barnes, Berkeley, California

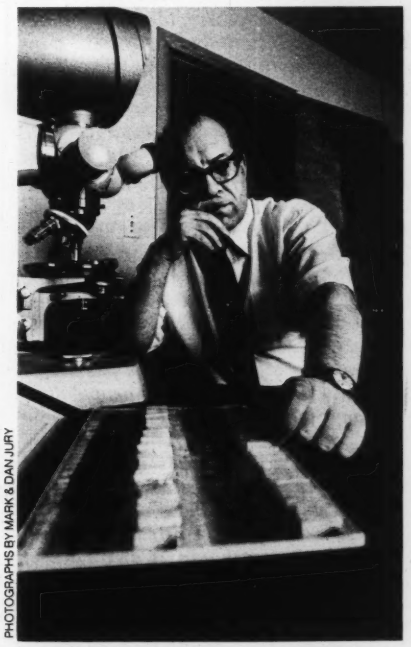
Honorable Mention: Dennis McDonald, Cherry Hill, New Jersey

Death Valley Days

by Larry Agran

The furor over the industrial pollution of a little town in Maryland has now spilled over into the courtroom. At issue: whether private industry can sue environmental critics for defamation of character

It would be difficult to imagine a more picturesque landscape. Little Elk Valley is located in the northeast corner of Maryland, several miles removed from the closest town. It is indeed a little valley—no more than three square miles and populated by about 120 people. Coming up the narrow winding road from the south, the valley's natural beauty is quickly evident. A small stream, called Little Elk Creek, flows from north to south through occasional meadows. Bridges are laid across the creek every few hundred yards. And the trees—dogwood, maple, elm—there are trees everywhere in the valley. In spring and summer, wildflowers of all colors are in bloom. But in the fall, it is the trees that provide the color.



PHOTOGRAPHS BY MARK & DAN JURY

Plaintiff and Defendant: Galaxy plant in Little Elk Valley (left) and Dr. Capurro in his home lab

Portions of this article are excerpted from the book, *THE CANCER CONNECTION: And What We Can Do About It*, by Larry Agran, published by Houghton Mifflin Company, Boston. Copyright © 1977 by Larry Agran.

In the summer of 1967, Dr. Peter Capurro, a pathologist, first came to Little Elk Valley. He was looking for a place to live for himself and his family. He recalled later that when he saw the valley, he felt he had discovered "a little Shangri-la." As luck would have it, among the few dozen dwellings in the valley, there was a house for sale. It was an impressive brick structure, just the right size and in good condition. Adjacent to the house was a sizable pond, a habitat for wild ducks. A path lined with azaleas, geraniums and tulips separated the house and the pond. Thinking back, the doctor says, "It seemed a dream world." He quickly bought the house. Within weeks the Capurros moved in—the doctor, his wife, Dorothy, and their two children, Claudia, then seven years old, and Christopher, five.

The very first weekend Dr. Capurro noticed a peculiar odor in the kitchen. He stepped outside and walked around the house, but was unable to locate the source of the foul smell. Finally, he called a neighbor, who told him that the odors came from the nearby Galaxy Chemical Company. Although it was ten o'clock in the evening, Capurro dialed the company's number. When a worker answered, the doctor wasted no time with niceties. He asked straight out if they were dumping chemicals in Little Elk Creek. The worker answered, "Yes." Capurro then asked if the chemicals were harmful to people. Again, "Yes." Do they damage the lungs? The worker didn't know.

The next day, Dr. Capurro called the county commissioner to complain. Then he called Galaxy's president, Mr. Paul J. Mraz. When he got Mraz on the phone, the doctor told him he smelled odors around the house that seemed to be chemical solvents—perhaps a mixture of benzene, toluene and xylene. Because of an unfortunate incident, Capurro was familiar with chemical solvents. Once before, when working in a hospital, he had been exposed to solvents through a faulty ventilation system. The experience had left him with a temporarily paralyzed left side and a rapidly fluctuating blood pressure. Ironically, the Capurros had come to Maryland to recover—to get away from chemical hazards. Mraz was pleasant but noncommittal about the matter. Nevertheless, he agreed to visit Dr. Capurro at his home to talk things over. When he arrived, Mraz explained that Galaxy was handling chemicals, but he denied that any significant odors were emitted. The doctor asked him if he had any carbon tetrachloride at the plant. Mraz denied it. The doctor said he felt certain that Galaxy was working with benzene, toluene and xylene—he knew what they smelled like. Mraz held firm in his denial, whereupon Capurro asserted that he would prove the presence of solvents in the air. Mraz asked him how, and the doctor replied, "With a gas chromatograph—to analyze air samples." Finally, exasperated at the bluntness of the Italian-born physician, Mraz blurted, "You can't even speak English."

Mraz was not altogether wrong about Capurro's English, but he had badly misjudged his adversary. Balding and slightly paunchy, Pietro Capurro may have the look of a man whose fight is behind him, but, as Mraz himself was soon to discover, he is a man of enormous energy, talent and tenacity. Born in Genoa, Italy, in

1925. Capurro fought in the Italian Underground against the Nazis during the Second World War, and graduated from the University of Genoa Medical School in 1951. In 1953, he came to the United States as a resident in pathology at Kings County Hospital in Brooklyn, New York. While continuing his studies at the Mount Sinai Hospital in Cleveland, Ohio, he studied under Dr. Harry Goldblatt, a distinguished researcher responsible for important breakthroughs in the treatment of kidney disease and pioneering work involving chemical carcinogenesis in small animals. During the late 1950s and 1960s, Dr. Capurro taught pathology to medical students. He also directed a hospital laboratory in Alton, Illinois. Finally, in 1966, he took a position as Director of Laboratories at Union Hospital in Cecil County, Maryland, only seven miles from the home he later purchased in Little Elk Valley.

By the time Capurro confronted Mraz, he was a naturalized American citizen well-versed in both pathology and civic responsibility. True to his word, he set out to prove that the Galaxy Chemical Company was polluting the water and air of the Little Elk Valley with dangerous chemicals. He began with a visit to the site, just a mile to the north of his new home.

A small outfit employing perhaps two dozen workers, the Galaxy Chemical Company occupies an old brick building with a tall chimney that, as a paper mill, had once spewed out pollution of a more benign sort. Galaxy bought the mill in 1961 and converted it for reclaiming solvents from discarded chemicals. By the truckload, chemical wastes began to arrive at Galaxy from a number of East Coast industrial plants, which were then distilled to recover certain chemicals for resale.

After his initial inspection of the plant, Dr. Capurro wrote down his impressions.

Only one worker was present at the plant. The plant was a stinking mess. At the rear of the plant two ponds are present. One black containing black material and one containing a yellowish watery fluid. These ponds emit a very acrid odor. On the grounds of the plant deep puddles of chemicals are present. Small streams of chemicals can be seen making their way toward the creek. The underground is combed with pipes. And an opening of pipes is present in the front of the plant. Several openings can be seen on the bank of the creek.

Capurro began to gather evidence with his gas chromatograph, an expensive machine that measures solvent vapors and other chemicals present in a small sample of air or water. The chemical dumping was an around-the-clock matter, with perhaps the heaviest discharges taking place in the early morning hours, so on repeated occasions, Capurro went out at night to gather evidence. Typically, he would awaken at one or two o'clock in the morning, feeling pain in his stomach and chest because of his sensitivity to solvents. Like a biological alarm clock, this was his signal that chemicals were heavy in the air. Equipment in hand, he would wander out, taking air and water samples in special syringes and injecting them into two separate gas chromatographs. Capurro recalls those initial forays vividly.

There was never one chemical in the air. At least two. Often six or seven. Up to fifteen at one time. I was going out night, day. Two o'clock, three o'clock at night. Sunday, Saturday. One night I went to a lagoon to test it and fell with one leg in the black lagoon. Right into the chemicals. I lost all the hair on my leg! I had to throw away my suit and shoes and stockings. But in the pond I found toluene and other chemicals. This was the first time I knew that toluene was present for certain at the plant, although I had already found toluene in the air near my house.

Over a four year period, four people had died of lymphomas—more than 60 times the expected death rate from cancer of the lymph-forming tissues

Toluene. One of many industrial solvents. Solvents are chemicals that dissolve things, such as grease and oil, paint and lacquer. But they also dissolve in the human body, causing temporary or permanent damage. The damage frequently produces quick symptoms: headaches, nausea, dizziness, lethargy, difficulty in breathing. Some of the solvents lead to biologic damage that is without apparent symptoms. Such as blood changes. And damage to cells that ultimately may lead to cancer.

Dr. Capurro was soon able to provide a fairly comprehensive list of the chemical solvents present in the valley's air and water. In addition to toluene, he found benzene, carbon tetrachloride and methyl ethyl ketone—all toxic substances, some suspected or confirmed cancer-causing agents. He began to take blood samples from many of the valley's residents and found these same chemical agents present at abnormally high levels. He began to notice the movement of chemicals. Contrary to what might be expected, the airborne chemicals did not disperse evenly throughout the valley the way water might fill a lake. They had a tendency to move along certain pathways—down along the banks of the Little Elk Creek, up a road, through a ravine. These pathways seemed to be formed by the wind and the local topography. On one side of the road, near a ravine, the chemicals might be heavily concentrated. Yet, on the other side of the road, readings might show only a small concentration.

But his nocturnal excursions and hypotheses about the airflows, as disturbing as they were, did not bother Capurro half as much as the evidence he encountered in his regular job as chief pathologist at the nearby Union Hospital.

About '68, '69, I think about people from the valley that were getting sick—fatigue, nausea, headaches. I diagnosed several cases of pancreatitis [inflammation of the pancreas]*—several at the same time—when there had been high levels of solvents in the air. Then, a little later, I start to think about cancer. I noticed that there was some increased incidence of lymphomas because Mrs. Nelson* died of lymphoma and Mr. Thompson died of lymphoma. Then I had a patient that I did an autopsy on, Mr. Rogers, who died of lymphoma. So three lymphomas. Then my neighbor Benson developed leukemia.*

It was about 1969 that I started looking at the possibility of increased incidence of tumors. Then, there was another man, a man who worked at the plant. His name was Weaver, Michael Weaver. He was twenty-one years old when I diagnosed him for carcinoma of the pancreas. On my suggestion, he went down to the University of Maryland where they confirmed the diagnosis, I've been told. He died a few months later.

Weaver married just before he died. He wanted to get married before he died. He was a very wonderful fellow. A very nice person. I had a very strong feeling for him and also for Mr. Rogers. Rogers was a very nice person. Very quiet. He came to us to help him three days before he died. He said he wanted to fight the plant. He said, "I feel so sick from the smell." Rogers wasn't bitter. He was passive at the end. Quiet. When I saw people die I would get more determined to fight.

Out of nine cancers from the valley, I diagnosed five. This was too much. I would think I diagnose too much from this area in comparison to the rest of the county. So I really started to look in 1973, together with Mr. [Carl] *York of the Maryland State Health Department* [Bureau of Air Quality Control]*. I found there was increased incidence. For some, I had their name. York, he knew some who died of malignancies. I took the data, put it all together, and made a short report for the State Health Department. Actually, we made it together, York and me. For those living there more than five years, the death rate from cancer was about five times higher than it should have been.*

*The actual names of patients have been changed to respect requirements of confidentiality.

Suffer the little children: This boy was often nauseated by the Valley's acrid air

A cancer death rate "about five times higher than it should have been." But even more alarming were the breakdowns on the kinds of cancer people were dying from in the Little Elk Valley. Over a seven-year period, four had died of lymphomas—cancer of the lymph-forming tissues. This was more than sixty times the expected death rate from malignant lymphomas. The chance that so many lymphomas would randomly occur in a population of 120 people is less than one in 100,000. Another two residents suffered from pancreatic tumors. The probability of observing two tumors of the pancreas in a population that small is six in 1,000, according to Capurro's research. (These two types of cancer—lymphomas and tumors of the pancreas—are increasingly common among chemists.) In fact, at almost the precise time that Dr. Capurro was puzzling over the cancer riddle of Little Elk Valley, a National Cancer Institute study was underway among members of the American Chemical Society, who were dying from cancer at a rate nearly 25 percent higher than that of other professional groups. And almost half of the excess deaths among the chemists were due to malignancies of the lymph glands or the pancreas.

Dr. Capurro was a worried man. His clinical and statistical surveys pointed to an extraordinary cancer risk to valley residents, including his own family. These findings, when published, were also creating another kind of health hazard for the doctor and his family. Capurro's mailbox was damaged or destroyed seven times. Stinking chemicals were thrown at his house. His automobile tires were slashed. Finally, in May 1972 he sold his house and moved his family out of the valley. But he did not quit. He continued to document the alarming excess of cancer deaths among the valley's 120 residents. Beyond this, he began to develop a sophisticated hypothesis about the cancer epidemic in Little Elk Valley. Knowing that the chemicals tended to move along certain pathways, he made house-by-house readings of chemical concentrations. He found that those struck down by cancer had generally had the misfortune of living in houses situated in a chemical pathway. While he avoided any public charges, he hypothesized that Galaxy was the cause of the elevated incidence of cancer, and that within the valley the risks were unevenly distributed among the residents, depending upon where they were located in relation to the chemical pathways that he had charted.

But even as he grew closer to a detailed explanation of the cancer tragedy of Little Elk Valley, he realized that his painstaking work was largely ignored by those who should have valued it most—the government officials charged with protecting the public's health.

I always furnished every data I got immediately to the State Department of Health. I was calling them, saying what I was finding—everything. They were ignoring it. They would say, "Maybe." Then they would say, "How can you prove it? Can you give your papers to us so we can look?" If I give my papers, they say, "We don't understand what it means. We don't understand. We don't know how to read it." So it was ridiculous. All this for them—for the State of Maryland—is a comedy. It is incredible. Oh, I think it is terrible. Even the Environmental Protection Agency . . .

Refusing to be overlooked, the doctor joined in efforts to publicize what was going on in Little Elk Valley.

The person who publicized it here was not me really. It was Dr. Kailin (a specialist in allergies and enviornmental medicine). She was hired by the State Health Department to check the health problem. They were decided there was no pollution—the State Health Department. For them it was all my invention. There was no chemicals in the air. Things were perfectly clean there. But they said we'll do another thing. We send Dr. Kailin to check it to see if there is any health problem. And Dr. Kailin came and said, yes, there is a health problem. But then, to them Dr. Kailin became a "nut," "no good," because she agreed with me. They knew her. They hire her. But she agrees with me so they said she was a nut.

What Kailin did, she knew some people at the Sentinel, *and she told the story to the reporter from the* Sentinel. *So they wrote an article—front page of the* Sentinel. *This was picked up by the* Washington Post *and they wrote some two or three articles about Galaxy. The* Washington Post *was picked up by the* National Observer—*front page. And then it was picked up by television. At the beginning publicity was not my doing . . . but I found myself in the middle of it . . . So it was Kailin; she got so mad at the State Health Department that she went to the newspapers. Then the newspapers looked for me. They felt I was the one to talk to.*

When the *Washington Post* interviewed Capurro for a front page article about Little Elk Valley in August 1974, he managed to collect his syntax and summarize the meaning of the evidence he had gathered. "I can't say that the deaths in the valley from cancer were the result of specific exposure to chemical fumes. But there have been a lot of chemicals in that valley's air and water and the blood of those people we tested, and some of those chemicals cause cancer. And we know there are a lot more malignancies there than you would expect . . . If you're in a room where everyone is scratched and there's a lion in there, too, then you've got to suspect the lion."

The *Post* article included statements by some of the valley's residents. The most colorful of the locals was Olive Feehly, an elderly lady who ran a small general store with her husband, George. The store was less than 200 yards west of the plant. Mrs. Feehly counted off on her fingers the names of her neighbors who had died recently. "This used to be a place where people died of old age and you'd go years without a funeral sometimes. Good Lord, nowadays I spend more time in the funeral parlor than I do in my own home."

After the *Washington Post* article ap-

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Chemical pathway: School-bound Valley children pass the Galaxy plant

peared, the *CBS Evening News* spotlighted the Little Elk Valley cancer episode in a five-minute news segment, and finally Capurro got some satisfaction. As he later noted, all the politicians who had spurned his phone calls now were on hold, waiting to get through.

But rather than test Dr. Capurro's hypothesis—correlating the cancer epidemic to the flow of chemical carcinogens through the Little Elk Valley—the State Department of Health refused to even acknowledge that there had been excess cancer deaths in the valley. They argued, instead, that the doctor should use a larger sample, one that included hundreds of people outside the immediate confines of the valley. But, of course, this was directly contrary to Capurro's hypothesis that this particular cancer epidemic was a local one because of the proximity of the valley's 120 residents to Galaxy and its resultant carcinogenic pathways.

More than anything else, it was this apparent attempt to cover up evidence of a localized cancer epidemic that infuriated the doctor. In private conversations, he drew analogies to Henrik Ibsen's play *Enemy of the People*, about a small-town physician who discovers that the town's mineral baths—its main tourist attraction—have become contaminated. He urges that the baths be shut down at once. Instead of being regarded as a benefactor of public health, the doctor is scorned—by businessmen, by the town's political leaders, and by its public health officials. They all have a stake in disbelieving the bad news. And, when the doctor confronts them with strident demands to protect the health of unsuspecting tourists, they at first dismiss his claims; then they attack his integrity; and, finally, they brand him an outcast. An enemy of the people. Dr. Capurro believed the same kinds of institutional forces were at work in the Little Elk Valley cancer controversy.

In June 1975, the Elk Valley story took a bizarre twist: the Galaxy Chemical Company and its principal officers sued Dr. Capurro for $2.5 million. They alleged that the doctor had publicly linked their chemical operations to Little Elk Valley's cancer epidemic, thereby heaping upon them "injurious falsehood, disparagement of property, libel, slander, and defamation."

That same year brought other important developments. Galaxy Chemical Company, always a marginal operation, found its creditors foreclosing on existing loans in November 1975. For a brief time, it appeared that the firm might go out of business. In satisfying its creditors, about half of Galaxy's equipment was sold off. But according to Paul Mraz, the remaining equipment was to be used in a new commercial process: refining antifreeze. Presumably no longer heavily involved in reclaiming solvents, the company was given a new lease on life. Not so, however, for the citizens who populated the valley. Olive Feehly, the 69-year-old proprietor of the small general store, died in March 1975. The cause of death was cancer of the pancreas. Another cancer coincidence? Or a cancer pox? Even before Olive Feehly's death, the evidence was reaching irrefutable proportions. Then, fifteen months after Olive died, her husband, George, died from lymphoma, the valley's fifth case of lymphoma.

The State of Maryland, always the dutiful disbeliever, was finally moved to conduct a study that it completed in late 1975. The most crucial statistic: valley residents (before the fifth case of lymphoma had been diagnosed) were dying from lymphatic cancer at a rate thirty times greater than normal. Because of the irreversible biologic damage already incurred by the living, the number and rate of cancer fatalities would be sure to increase still further. All the classic characteristics were there: carcinogenic exposures, the long latency period—frequently ten years or more—and then the excessive cancer deaths. This improbable place, Little Elk Valley, Maryland, was the site of a cancer epidemic—an epidemic in slow motion.

But the numbers by themselves missed an important aspect of the environmental issue. If a scientist were to set out to design a model to test the cancer-causing effects of industrial carcinogens upon a limited, locally exposed population, he or she would be hard pressed to find a better model than that which has existed in the Little Elk Valley. In virtually every respect, the valley is a near perfect test tube: geographically isolated, with a small and stable population, and onle one source of intense chemical pollution—the Galaxy Chemical Company. Like any other test tube model, its real importance lies in what it tells us about the world beyond the test tube.

What, for instance, if the Galaxy Chemical Company had never located in Little Elk Valley but had located instead in a neighborhood in Wilmington, Delaware? One likely consequence, of course, would have been that the residents of Little Elk Valley, Maryland, would have been spared the cancer calamity that has befallen them. But what of the residents of Wilmington, Delaware? They would have incurred the repeated carcinogenic insults that apparently lead to an excessive cancer rate. But who would have known? Who would have made the discovery? Probably no one. The tangle of urban life in Wilmington is so complex that the variables can never be satisfactorily sorted out. To begin with, there are many more people, and they move in and out by the thousands each year. They receive medical attention—and cancer diagnoses—from many different physicians, none of whom would be likely to see enough pieces to understand the whole puzzle. Six or seven excess cancer deaths in Little Elk Valley, observed by one physician, is a striking occurrence. In Wilmington, Delaware, six or seven excess cancer deaths spread over several years—or even sixty or seventy excess cancer deaths spread over several years—would probably go unnoticed. The population base is simply too large.

So much for hypothetical situations. The fact is that across the United States hundreds upon hundreds of Galaxy-type operations are running daily. In Wilmington, the so-called Chemical Capital of the World, in Chicago, in St. Louis, in New York, in Birmingham. If there is any difference at all, it is only one of scale. For in Wilmington and elsewhere, the plants that do essentially the same kind of work—involving the massive use of chemical solvents—are perhaps 50 or 100 times the size of the Galaxy Chemical Company.

This is not a case of fanciful theorizing. Clinical and statistical data confirm that the cancer pox is spreading beyond the occupational setting. A study of Los Angeles County cancer rates recently reported a markedly higher incidence of lung cancer among residents in the heavily industrialized south-central area. The study attributed the excess lung cancers to particularly high levels of benzo(a)pyrene, a carcinogen that is probably formed from effluents from the petroleum and chemical industries concentrated in the area. Years earlier, a similar

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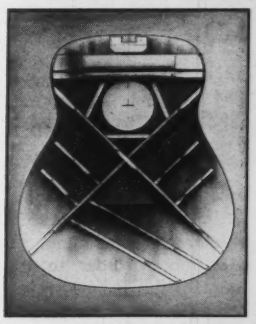

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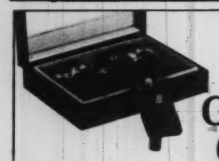

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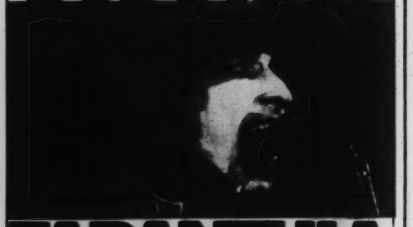

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study on Staten Island, New York, disclosed that unusually high lung cancer rates in certain parts of the island seemed to be related to local wind conditions and the resulting exposure to airborne industrial carcinogens originating at nearby oil refineries.

More statistical evidence: in 1975, the National Cancer Institute published an *Atlas of Cancer Mortality for U.S. Counties: 1950–1969* showing the county-by-county variations in cancer death rates across the United States for sixteen common anatomic sites of the disease. The *Atlas* is an intriguing 103-page document that includes sixty-six separate color-coded maps of the United States. Each map is a mosaic of bright colors painted into oddly shaped little areas corresponding to county boundaries or state economic areas. Some areas are colored red. Others blue. Still others are green or yellow. The irony is inescapable: these maps, so lively and colorful,

In private conversations, Capurro drew analogies to Ibsen's *Enemy of the People*, about a small-town physician who discovers the town's mineral baths have become contaminated

represent the geography of gray, malignant death. But more than irony is present here. The *Atlas* provides important clues to the factors contributing to cancer causation in industrialized American communities. For example, on the color-coded map depicting the geography of lung cancer, splotches of yellow, orange and red—the colors indicating above-average lung cancer death rates—appear in counties where a significant percentage of the work force is engaged in smelting and refining copper, lead and zinc ores. Inorganic arsenic, a known carcinogen, is an airborne by-product of the smelting of these ores. But this is not simply one further example of occupationally induced cancer; the data demonstrate above-average lung cancer rates for females as well as males in these counties. The meaning of this seems clear: the occupational cancer risk from arsenic, once limited to the men working with the substance, is now threatening whole communities.

Communities such as Kellogg, Idaho. Fresh air and open spaces and blue skies are some of the alluring qualities of the American Northwest. But in Kellogg, Idaho, the home of a huge lead-smelting company, the skies seemed to have become carcinogenic pathways, carrying the gray, metalloid crystals of arsenic into the lives and lungs of the Kellogg citizenry. In Shoshone County, where Kellogg is located, the lung cancer mortality rate for white males is 61 percent greater than the statewide lung cancer rate. And for white females, it is 80 percent greater than the statewide rate. While children are too young to manifest and succumb to lung cancer, their lungs and lymphatic systems, their guts and their skins absorb the arsenic. Their cell systems suffer the silent violence of carcinogenic bombardment as they grow from infants, to toddlers, to adolescents, to adults.

Nor are atmospheric pathways the only carriers of carcinogens. Local and regional waterways have become the liquid pathways that carry industrial carcinogens into the general community. In November 1974, Dr. Robert Harris of the Environmental Defense Fund released the results of a major study that sought to explain the disturbingly high rate of cancer deaths in New Orleans, Louisiana. The conclusion was that the excessive deaths were primarily the result of cancers of the digestive and excretory organs. And these cancers, in turn, could be linked to the carcinogen-laden drinking water obtained from the Mississippi River (*New Times*, May 13, 1977).

Most of America's rivers now carry cancer-causing petroleum wastes—fuel oils, lubricating oils and cutting oils. They carry coal tar, pitch, creosote, and anthracene oil—all confirmed carcinogens. They carry carcinogens from dye and rubber industries—beta-Naphthylamine, benzidine and 4-Aminodiphenyl.

There are those who scoff at such matters, taking refuge in the fantasy that because the waterborne carcinogen levels are low-dose, they therefore must fall within some mythical "margin of safety." What is overlooked here is the cumulative nature of the cancerization process. For the residents of New Orleans or other communities similarly afflicted with waterborne carcinogens, the low-level exposures become a day in and day out, unrelenting series of cellular insults. For some people—we can never know in advance who they are—the accumulated carcinogenic burden becomes too great to handle. They become victims of cancer.

What is the measurable human toll? In the Environmental Defense Fund study, researchers compared New Orleans, which draws its drinking water supplies from the Mississippi River, with nearby Louisiana parishes, which utilize local ground water free of these carcinogens. They found substantially higher mortality rates from cancer of the bladder, kidney, stomach and colon—the digestive and excretory organs—among New Orleans residents. Among white males alone, and only in New Orleans, researchers calculated that more than fifty premature cancer deaths each year were

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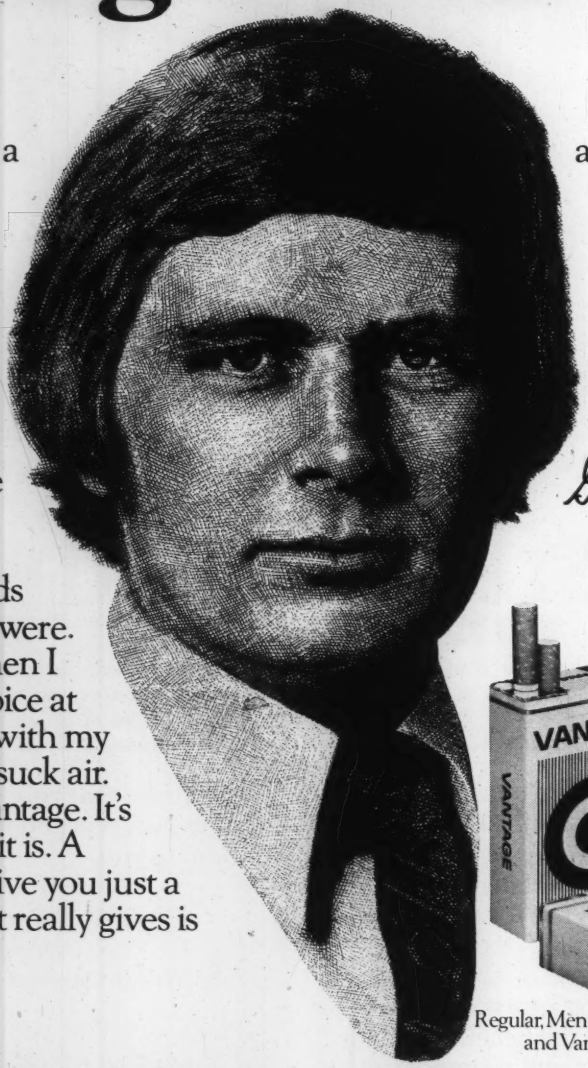

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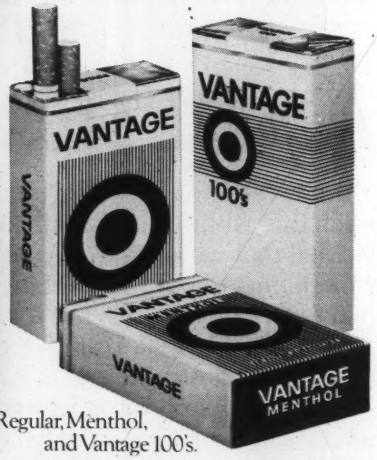

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the consequence of drinking carcinogen-contaminated water.

Government testing undertaken in the aftermath of the Environmental Defense Fund study revealed that the problem was not local to New Orleans. Of the seventy-nine drinking water systems subsequently studied by the federal government, *all* of them—Philadelphia's, Cincinnati's, Miami's, Seattle's and many more—contained significant quantities of cancer-causing contaminants. Liquid carcinogenic pathways. If the New Orleans experience is an indicator of the consequences of ingesting water

There was never one chemical in the air. At least two. Often six or seven. Up to fifteen at one time

laden with carcinogens, then the aggregate national cancer toll that is reasonably attributable to contaminated drinking-water supplies may number many thousands of Americans each year.

It is against the backdrop of a worsening nationwide epidemic of environmentally linked cancer that the seemingly parochial case of *Galaxy Chemical, Inc.* vs. Pietro U. Capurro goes to trial this week. The case will be tried before a jury in Denton, Maryland, in the Caroline County Courthouse. Nationally recognized experts in carcinogenesis, including pathologists, cancer epidemiologists and biostatisticians will testify as to the quality and significance of Dr. Capurro's work.

According to a summary of its complaint, Galaxy will try to prove that Capurro's public statements and published articles, made "under the guise of scientific research, were, in fact, arrived at through careless, non-objective, and non-scientific methods, and were coupled with an obsessive zeal to prove Galaxy responsible for an allegedly excessive rate of cancer . . ."

Much more will hinge on the outcome than the possible civil liability of a lone scientist; if, by chance, Galaxy should prevail in its suit, the entire science of environmental carcinogenesis will have been dealt a major setback. Those searching out the Cancer Connection will find that when the evidence they uncover leads to the gates of identifiable corporations, there they will be confronted by corporate officials brandishing the threat of multi-million-dollar lawsuits for "defamation," "disparagement of property" or other alleged sins if the matter should become the focus of public attention. All but the most courageous researchers and publishers can be expected to back off in the face of that kind of legally sanctioned intimidation.●

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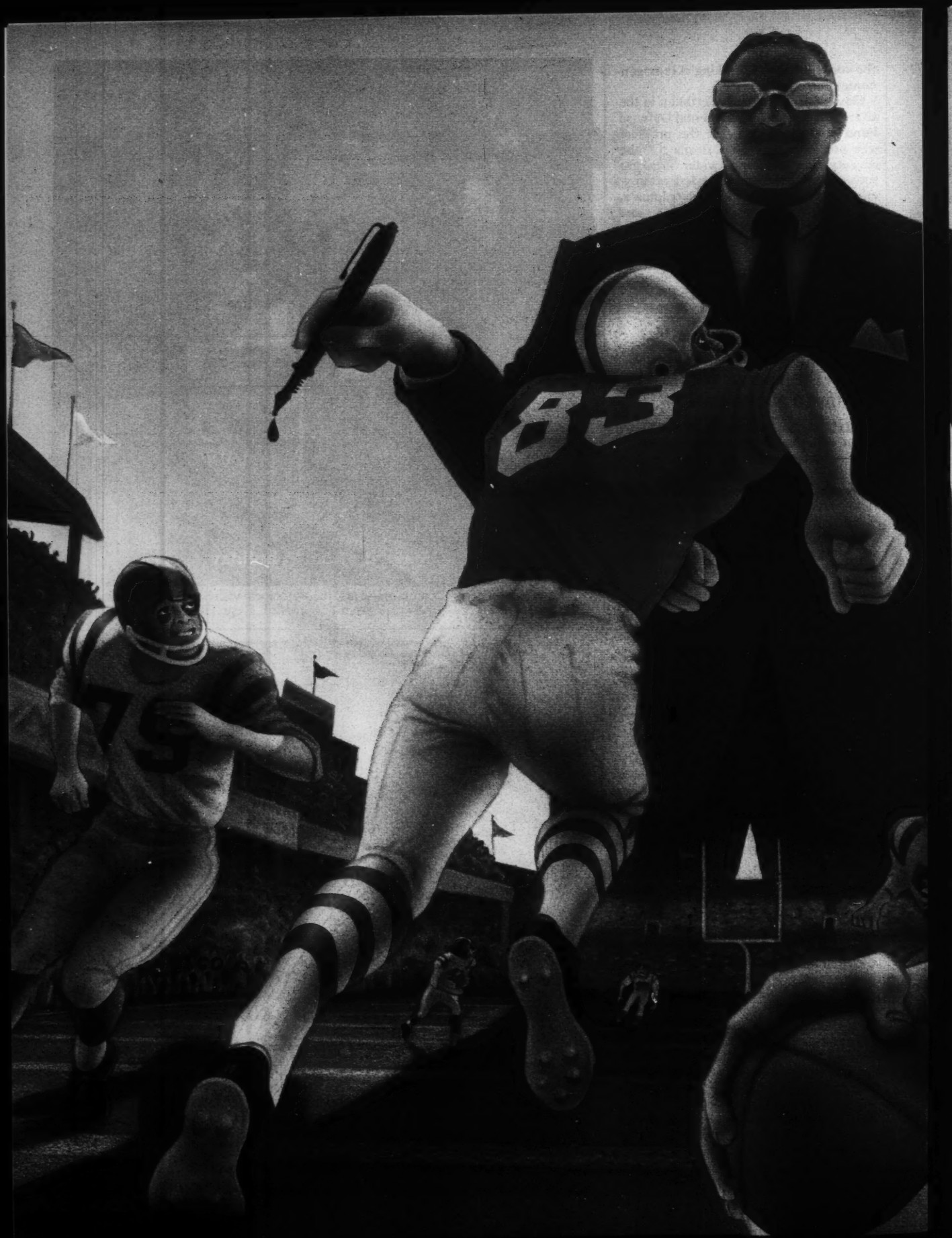
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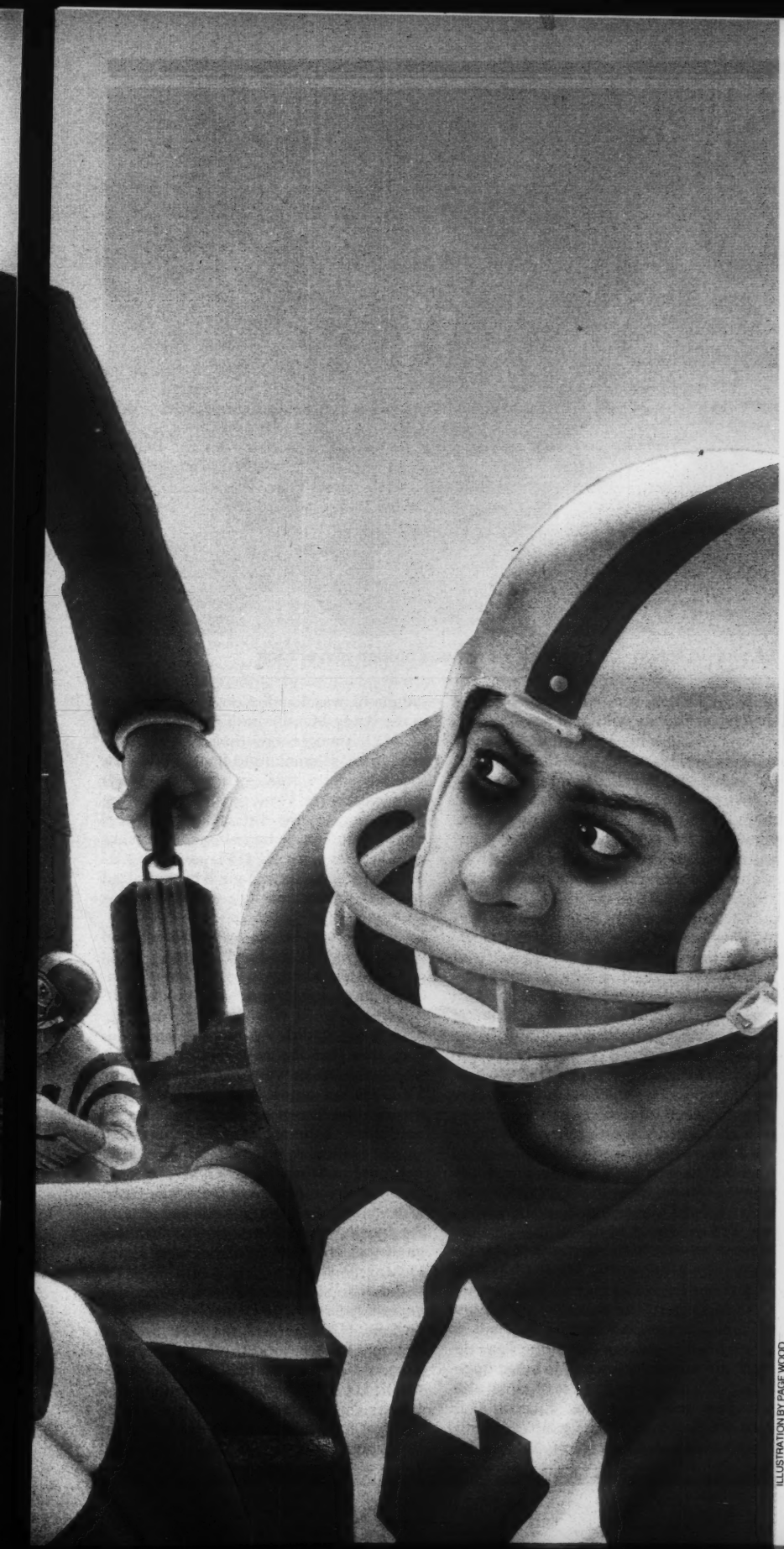

ILLUSTRATION BY PAGE WOOD

THE FEARSOME ONESOME

NFL club owners are trembling in the shadow of a 5'6", 240-pound lawyer who advises his player-clients that they can get rich quicker by *not* playing

Howard Slusher is sitting in his downtown Los Angeles office, surrounded by piles of NFL helmets, murals of the Pittsburgh Steelers and blow-ups of New England Patriots running back Sam Cunningham. He lights his first cigar of the day and picks up a ringing telephone. The caller is Tom Skladany, the talented, recalcitrant punter drafted by the Cleveland Browns, and the subject is the contract that Skladany, the NFL's last rookie holdout, has not yet signed with owner Art Modell.

"How's it going?" Howard almost squeaks. "So you talked to Modell? What did he say? Uh-huh . . . Uh-huh . . . What did you say to him? . . . Ha . . . Tommy, I love ya . . . I love ya . . . Yeh, I can just hear his voice getting higher. Hell, you don't need me anymore, you can do this thing yourself . . . Yeh, you're beautiful. He must have been really pissed when he put down that phone . . .

"Okay, where's your head? You want to play there, Cleveland? . . . That's what I thought. You sound perfectly rational, reasonable . . . I think you did a super job in the meeting. The fact that he was pissed at me on the phone indicates that you did a super job . . . So think about it today and call me tonight collect and then if you want, I'll call Modell tomorrow and go over the numbers, the clauses, the tax problems . . . How's your stomach about this? I understand how you think, but how do you feel viscerally?

"Yeh, Modell must be tight as a drum. He sees you missing 250,000 bucks, me

missing my attorney's fee, and he can't figure it out. He's got feelers all around the league, trying to find out if there's a deal anywhere else . . . That's right, the thing these guys don't want to see is the truth . . . Modell calls you friend, but he doesn't respect you, am I right?"

Slusher flips on his squawk box. "Yeh," Skladany says. "I respect the hell out of Modell because he's stood his ground. He can't let one smart-ass rookie screw up his team for future negotiations. But I don't want to know him, because he has too much power to control me.

"The typical thinking," Skladany continues, "is, 'Isn't it a shame, the spot you're in.' They assume that you're holding me out, or that I'm so stupid I don't know what I'm doing. Everyone is giving it to me, my boss, my girl, everyone . . ."

The conversation ends, and a self-satisfied Slusher sits back. "See, it's like this," he explains. "The owners like the kids, but don't respect them. The kids don't like the owners, but they're in awe of them. They wonder, 'How did they get to where they could have so much power over my life?' The kid resents him, but he still respects him. Besides, he's worried he could get shuffled off to Buffalo.

"So the owner and the ballplayer have dramatically opposite views. The focus now is on my keeping the owner from his property. When I 'keep' [he punctuates 'keep' heavily] a player out of camp, I'm hurting his family. Like Modell called up Skladany and said, 'You owe it to me to come up here. I drafted you.' Or Carroll Rosenbloom, the owner of the Rams. He looks at it like the Godfather . . . he sees his family breaking up. When the kid says, 'I won't sign,' he's like the adolescent breaking away from home and rebelling, and *the owner doesn't know how to handle this*. So who does he blame? Not the wayward son, but the external force—the *agent* . . . It's like the kid who brings the wrong girl home, the father doesn't blame the son, he blames the liberal college professor . . ."

Howard Slusher looks the very model of a modern jockstrap agent, but in fact, he's not an agent at all. He is a lawyer who negotiates contracts, and he is eager to draw the distinction.

"Understand, I'm strictly a lawyer. Agents? I wish I were good enough to be an agent. I wish I were good enough to get Sam Cunningham a movie contract and a Chrysler ad. That's the stuff Mark McCormack does. He seeks out athletes and gets jobs for them. I don't. They come to me—and I'm singularly unsuccessful in taking a kid who's fired and getting him employed. They bring their job to me, and my only expertise comes in getting them something above what the club is already willing to pay."

BUFFALO EVENING NEWS

Slusher in action: And now for the famous hidden player trick

Slusher sighs his lugubrious lawyer's sigh; the weight of the world's fools is on his ample shoulders. "It isn't easy, you know. Some of these guys are animals, they don't know *what* they're doing, what their impact is, or what in *hell* is going on out there. They have to learn to protect themselves from the real world—and from Howard Slusher."

Whether or not pro football yet qualifies as the real world is arguable. For years major-league ball clubs lived in an autistic world in which reality was refracted by the owners to suit their own purposes. No one in cutthroat, capitalist America enjoyed the power and privileges conferred on professional club owners by Congress and the courts. Towering above all laws was the reserve clause, which effectively bound a player to a club for his sporting life—unless or until the owner chose to trade him or set him out to pasture. The owners' traditional attitude toward players—particularly, toward player rights and benefits—was patronizing at best.

Now all that is being changed, by the players *and* the courts. The Rozelle rule, laid down by National Football League Commissioner Pete Rozelle, stated that if a player jumped from one team to another after playing out a one-year option, the original team had to be compensated by a player or players of equal ability. That rule was struck down in U.S. District Court in Minneapolis by Judge Earl Larson in 1975. (A roughly similar judgment was handed down in baseball in the Andy Messersmith case.) Suddenly, NFL owners saw their players slipping through manicured hands like slick footballs on a cold, wet autumn afternoon. So, after 37 months of exhausting negotiations, the panicked owners signed a collective bargaining agreement with Ed Garvey's NFL Players Association last February that gave both drafted collegiate stars and free-agent veterans unprecedented freedom of movement. In a few swift strokes pro football had been turned on its head. No one could possibly tell when America's most glamorous and visible sport would aright itself again, or in what form it would appear when it did. All anyone knew for sure was that the new *modus operandi* was going to be very expensive—some $107 million among the 28 NFL clubs through the five-year life of the pact, according to estimates from the commissioner's office.

Emerging from this maelstrom of bold new visions and ancient fears was Howard Slusher, a rotund, red-haired Los Angeles lawyer (from the same firm that gave you Herbert Kalmbach and Frank DeMarco) to represent some 50 NFL standouts. Slusher had been around for several years, negotiating contracts for various NFL players (as well as Paul Westphal, star guard of the Phoenix Suns of the National Basketball Association). He had built a reputation as a tough, hard-nosed negotiator, nothing more or less than that. But the NFL, like they say, hadn't seen nothin' yet. First

he filed objections to the settlements that followed Judge Larson's ruling on behalf of ten free agents challenging the collective bargaining agreement between players and management. In other words Slusher, representing ten dissatisfied ballplayers, was taking on both the owners *and* the players' union. The reasoning, as set forth by Ram defensive end Jack Youngblood (not himself a party to the suit): "The way the agreement was sold to us, it wouldn't be that hard to move. But this agreement isn't even close to what we thought it would be."

Of course the challenge went nowhere, but it did set the stage for the star-spangled Slusherian pageant of the 1977 season. With the foundations of the reserve system blasted from beneath the game, football had taken the last lurching step from the open fields of Frank Merriwell to the closed doors of Sammy Glick. The game was, to paraphrase an old joke, up to its eyeballs in agents. One of the older, more established of the breed, attorney Bob Woolf of Boston, went so far as to address himself to this problem at a Harvard Law School symposium. He lashed out at agents for their preposterous demands, then flayed management for granting the following provisions: "that a player must start and be prominently featured in any game on national TV; that a player can veto any position switch he finds unappetizing; that he be guaranteed a certain amount of playing time; that he have limousine service to and from airports and have his own hotel room or even a suite."

Those are the contemporary lunacies that will drive the Sammy Baughs and Doak Walkers and Frank Giffords to put revolvers to their temples. Woolf answered in his own Draconian terms: such madness must be stopped, at peril of the future of professional sports.

Against this background, Howard Slusher introduced a new player-owner negotiating concept that seemed so monstrously innovative that it threw the entire sports community into paroxysms of rage and disbelief. Actually, the ploy is as old as the tale of the Sabine women; Slusher politely calls it "withholding services," and what it means is: you can haul me off to your lair, but you can't make me hump.

Briefly, Slusher advised a number of clients that, if they weren't happy with their contracts, or the current contractual negotiations, they could simply not report to summer training camp. Then if they were not satisfied when the season started, they could refuse to play. Simple, but lethal. In Baltimore all-pros John Dutton and Roger Carr did not report to camp, and Dutton, one of the two or three best young defensive linemen in the league, did not play the first two games. Skladany, a second-round draft choice out of Ohio State, refused to sign with the Cleveland Browns. There were other holdouts, and they all led back to Slusher. "Isn't it significant," says the Brown's Art Modell, "that at one point all of the players out of camp were in his stable?" But the circumstance that

"On a $400,000 bonus, they want to give a kid $20,000 a year over 20 years. That just makes the kid the banker, lending the club money interest-free"

stirred the nastiest controversy—and it is turning out to be one of those dreadful situations in which nobody is entirely right or wrong, and nobody wins—is the Hannah-Gray case.

John Hannah and Leon Gray are the offensive right guard and right tackle, respectively, of the New England Patriots, the only team to defeat the Super Bowl champion Oakland Raiders last year. They were touted as solid Super Bowl contenders before this season; but without Hannah and Gray, who had demanded that their contracts be extended and sweetened, they lost two of their first three games. Now, it must be noted that they lost those two games by identical scores of 30-27, indicating deficiencies of defense rather than offense. Yet a football team is a delicately balanced mechanism, and how much Hannah's and Gray's absence threw the Patriots out of kilter is impossible to gauge. However, it is undeniably more difficult for an offensive player to work his way back into the rhythm of operation than for a defensive player. From the moment John Dutton walked back onto the field in Baltimore he was up to his old tricks of making life miserable for rival quarterbacks, and the Colts are shoe-ins for the playoffs. But New England has lost two games *with* Hannah and Gray in the lineup; they lost 24-14 to a demoralized Buffalo Bill team that had, the previous week, given up 56 points to the expansion Seattle Seahawks, and were subsequently defeated by the Miami Dolphins 17-5. Come January, the Patriots will, like 80 million other Americans, watch Super Bowl XII on the tube.

Aside from the fact that the Patriots have plainly suffered from the contract war, there are two aspects of the Hannah-Gray matter that call Slusher's ethics into question: one, both had existing contracts and, two, they *appeared* to walk out and negotiate in tandem, which could be construed as a violation of the new collective bargaining agreement (things have come to a remarkable pass when collective bargaining is outlawed under a collective bargaining agreement, but that's another matter). The pair only returned to work when urged to do so by a four-man Players-Owners Relations Committee—a decision which Slusher, to everyone's surprise, instantly applauded. Slusher likes to answer questions about such paradoxes with parables. For example: "I went to Israel once, and was on a public bus with a colonel, a student I had known at Southern Cal. I was listening to the radio and finally asked him, 'Why do they keep repeating the news?' He said, 'That's the military system of alert. The code words we snare appear in the news, so when an alert comes, we know what to do. There's no pattern; it's done at random.'"

Slusher lets the lesson sink in. "See," he says, "if you don't let people follow a pattern on you, you can outmaneuver them . . ."

And the men whom he is outmaneuvering? They haven't exactly branded him the anti-Christ yet, but it's coming to that. Owners claim he's upsetting the delicate fiscal balance of a game in which even the fabulous television contracts (the new one will mean $5 million a year per team) can barely offset spiraling costs; general managers charge that he is ruining player-management relations; and coaches insist, in screeds black with epithets, that he destroys team morale every time he pokes his cigar into a locker room.

Slusher's more outspoken detractors include Chuck Sullivan, vice-president, New England Patriots ("When a lawyer encourages people not to perform a contract, that is intolerable conduct. I've lost all my respect for him and, what's more, I think he's hurt the careers of some important players"); Don Klosterman, general manager, Los Angeles Rams ("He's done a good job of mesmerizing some of his players. When I see him keeping a seventh or eleventh round draft choice out of camp, I know the advice is precluding them from making the club"); and the aforementioned Art Modell ("He has alienated the player from the club . . . I don't like the idea of taking kids out of camp, and I don't like being put into the adversary role. To win you need togetherness, respect—Lombardi called it love. But Slusher doesn't care about that. He likes notoriety and exposure at the expense of the kids he's poisoned . . . we get to the point where the kid is no good to us, because you can't buy loyalty . . . All I know is, if the Browns have the option, we will not select players in the draft represented by Slusher.")

But there are some cheers amidst the chorus of boos.

Dan Rooney, president, Pittsburgh Steelers (and member of the four-man Owner-Player Board that ruled against Slusher) says, "I think Howard is a bright fellow. He's always personable, meetings with him are always cordial. Sure, he's a tough negotiator, and his demands are stiff; a session with Howard Slusher is not going to go quickly. Basically, we haven't had a whole lot of trouble with him. We respect his position that he is trying to do the best for his players. I certainly can't criticize the players for trying to get more money. Every aspect of society does that; unfortunately, ours if the most visible business in the country these days. Sure, our payrolls are high, but that's true of any service business like ours. Besides, the owners are as much to blame for today's salaries as the players, because they, after all, pay them. It's up to the owner to sit down and say, 'No more.' "

And Baltimore Colts defensive end John Dutton gives Slusher another favorable review. "I liked Howard right away," he says. "I didn't feel about him the way I felt about other agents—I thought he was sincere. That's the way I choose my friends, and Howard and I are close friends. As for staying out, that was strictly my decision. In fact, Howard advised me to go into camp, but I decided to stay out. Now I'll be a free agent at the end of the year and can bargain. You have to get the money while you can. All the stuff about guys like Slusher ruining the game is invented by the owners. Football is prospering like it never has before. Howard's trying to get a decent slice of that for the ballplayers; after all, it's us that people are there to watch, not the owners. Besides, they don't give a damn about you when you're done, so the time to get it is now."

So whom does the ballplayer need to be protected from? What passes for the real world, or Slusher?

It's day's end by now, and Slusher says, "C'mon, let's go have a beer." We walk across Flower street to a terminally chic TGIF bar. Slusher stops at the hors d'oeuvres counter on the way to a table and helps himself to four heaping platefuls of meatballs. He devours them systematically, one by one, like a beast of prey expertly ingesting fresh carrion. "I like to eat, all right," he admits. "I used to work at this place in New York—you know Zabar's? Great delicatessen. Anyway, we didn't get to have any of the real delicacies. So my last day there I decided that, one way or another, I was going to have sturgeon. I went downstairs and picked out this big, gorgeous sturgeon. I realized I couldn't slice it up, because then the owners would know there had been pilferage. So I ate the whole sturgeon. Boy, that was terrific! A few years ago I went back to Zabar's and bought about six bucks worth of food, and gave them a twenty. When they brought me the change I just said, 'Keep it. Take my word I owe it to you.' "

With that, Slusher makes another trip to the hors d'oeuvres counter. He doesn't drink much, but his food intake is most impressive . . . a whole sturgeon, for God's sake . . .

We begin the long, long drive he makes twice daily between L.A. and Long Beach. The drive doesn't bother Slusher; like so many transplanted New Yorkers who grew up in the confines of subways and tenements, he loves to exercise the right of every free man west of the Hudson to get out on those freeways and drive hell out of that car. He was born in Jersey City, actually, but grew up in the Williamsburg section of Brooklyn, a tough Jewish kid who fought his share of Puerto Ricans with bicycle chains and once leveled an iron post with his head after scoring a touchdown for Boys High. He graduated from Brooklyn College, and got a Master's and a Ph.D. in physical education with a major in the psychology of sports. He taught first at Ohio State, then Maryland and finally at USC for nine years, during which time he earned a law degree and wrote *Man, Sport and Existence: A Critical Analysis*. He joined his present firm in 1972.

"The fans are supporting the brass. I don't get it. The Slushers and Kapsteins are the black hats and the Rosenblooms and Modells are the heroes. It's incredible..."

"It wasn't too long after I joined the firm," he remembers, "that this kid Jim Lawrence, a student of mine at USC, was drafted by the New Orleans Saints. He asked me if I'd help him. Well, he never played because of injuries, but with that contract I got him paid for two years. After that, well, most of my early players were USC grads . . . Westphal, Cunningham at the Patriots, Lynn Swann at Pittsburgh . . .

"But the stupidest thing I hear is how I 'control' these players. I don't have any control over these guys. Larry Fleisher of the NBA Players Association, and Garvey in the NFL, they have the real control. I don't even have a contract with my players . . . the NFL knows this, and that's why they're constantly after players . . . drop Slusher, drop Slusher, drop Slusher. Why? I guess I'm in vogue now, it's time to get Slusher. Don't worry, in two years I'll be as extinct as the dinosaur—they won't need me anymore. Besides, I can't be that scary. I'm just trying to do the right legal job for my client. The trouble is, the way things are now, you can't do that. Players and clubs aren't conditioned to this notion, they really aren't. Take the clubs with their deferred payments. On a $400,000 bonus, say, they want to give a kid $20,000 a year over 20 years. They say it's for his own good, so he'll have money when he retires. Are you kidding? That just makes the kid the banker, lending the club money interest-free. No businessman in the world would go for that without a personal guarantee or a financial statement. I asked one club for a financial statement and the guy nearly threw me out of the office. They thought I was insulting their integrity. Or another one offered a hundred grand deferred and I said, 'Okay, let's take the cash tomorrow and put it into Prudential Insurance Company in the form of an annuity.' The guy hit the ceiling; he was no more interested in the kid's welfare than the man in the moon."

"I've had club after club come to me and say, 'Get this kid to sign, you can convince him that this is right.' That's how they start using me as instruments of themselves. Well, that's the last role I see for myself. It would be easy for me to say what the readers want to hear. They want to hear that I'm interested in the laborers, but that we won't ask for an increase because we don't want to hurt the economy as a whole . . . that's bullshit. My only interest is my client.

"Their big problem is one of paternalism, you see. But that's my problem also. It's easy to let these kids lean on you, to become a father or brother substitute, but I'm not here to act *in loco parentis*. And I wonder if I'm using Skladany. I have to watch that very, very carefully. I have to ask myself, 'Is Howard Slusher playing a game just to beat the owners?' I don't honestly think I am. The reason is that I feel down deep that Tom wants a chance to play in another city. The only thing that would turn him around is too much money to turn down. I thought maybe he'd sign today, frankly. I thought they'd lay on enough money, but they didn't. I'd rather he didn't play in Cleveland because of the wind off Lake Erie, it's death on a punter. Elsewhere in the right climate, he could be the best kicker ever.

"But I repeat, it's not what *I* want, or what the owner wants, that counts; it's what Tom wants. The owners still don't quite see that. They count on the agent getting the kid to sign because the agent

is getting a percentage of the action. Hell, some of the agents are lending kids money while they're in college, they've got to get their money out of the deal. I'm just getting the straight lawyer's fee of seventy-five bucks an hour. *That's* the big difference between a lawyer and an agent."

But the question arises: Is not what is good for General Bullmoose just a little bit good for the country? Don't the players have a vested interest in seeing the owners prosper, and don't outrageous demands and summary walkouts endanger that prosperity? "Look," says Slusher, "the people who have the most to lose are the people with the long-term vested interest. And believe me, they're bright enough to protect those interests. Remember, they have all the power and money, all the attorneys and accountants, on their side. They traditionally solve problems by passing rules. Like the Rozelle Rule. When R.C. Owens left San Francisco to play for Baltimore, they passed the Rozelle Rule. Now they'll figure out more rules to keep themselves in control.

"It's just that right now they're scared of guys like me. New England got scared because I was handling a bunch of their players—and then, all of a sudden, I'm handling Hannah and Gray too. They were talking about how I was taking over the club. That's ridiculous. Or Chuck Sullivan saying about Hannah and Gray, 'We didn't lose games because of them, but because of the disruption.' Well, the blame can just as easily be placed on the Sullivans as on John and Leon. Their contracts state that *they have the right not to play*. That's in every contract, but no one exercised it at the time we did. Mike Reid of the Cincinnati Bengals exercised it a few years ago because he wanted to concentrate on his music, and I didn't hear any complaints about that. Or if Namath wants to retire now because he's decided he doesn't want to play anymore, nobody will beef. But is that any more ethical than saying you don't want to play because the money isn't right?

"Understand," says Slusher, waving his cigar now, "this is not a moral subject. People want it to be, because they feel guilty about money. Hell, *I* feel guilty about money. But I'm sorry, this is an *amoral* subject. Someone once told me that I was an idealist without ideals, and they may be right. But this is *not a moral subject*. No one can force me to live in an apartment. They can obligate me to pay for the lease, but they can't make me live there. Well, no one has to play for New England, and no one ever asked New England to pay for this."

We arrive at his house, a very modest stucco in Long Beach, some distance from the water. Howard Slusher, the

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bête noir of the NFL ownership, has a bright, handsome wife named Nancy, Maryland '64, who sails, scuba dives and flies airplanes. He has a sports-mad boy named John, and a pretty daughter named Jennifer Nadia. He has a family that loves him, and even his players sometimes become a part of that family. Sam Cunningham, for example, is Jennifer's godfather.

"I don't handle any crazies," Slusher boasts. "I turn them down cold. I want all the kids I handle to be godfather to my own kids. Life's too short for me to handle people who aren't interested in being human beings." We're sitting at the Long Beach Yacht Club now; Slusher has ordered himself a big grapefruit juice from the bar. He is, you will have noticed, eager to talk, to tell his story. But he is also defensive about it, and that is his least endearing trait. He is constantly punctuating his discourse with "I know your gonna knock me," or "I know you'll think I'm crazy, but . . ." or "I may be the most naive guy in the world . . ." I've decided I like Howard better as the registered hard-ass than the fellow with the Heart As Big As All Outdoors. Still, it is important to know about Howard Slusher that he demands to be understood, and yearns to be loved. "Here's the heart of my style," he says. "Oregon played USC last year. After the game, we were going down to San Diego to see Sam play. Jennifer spots a button that says, 'Trojans make better lovers.' She doesn't get it, of course; she buys the pin and wraps it in toilet paper and gives it to Sam. He hugs and kisses her and says, 'This'll bring me luck.' So Sam has his biggest day of the year. There are reporters all over the place. But he came out of the dressing room one hour later wearing that pin on his shirt. He cared enough to realize that she would be waiting. Jennifer ran over and said, 'See, Sam, it brought you luck.' And Sam gave her another big kiss. That's the kind of ballplayer I'm talking about."

Coaches insist, in screeds black with epithets, that he destroys team morale every time he pokes his cigar into a locker room

Slusher is off on a vector of love now, and you can't stop him here anymore than you can stop him on his vectors of wrath. "I made a mistake with Sam Cunningham, you know. I didn't do right by him. He came to me and said, 'I don't want this, I don't want to play.' I said, 'Sam, take this, believe me. Take it.' That was the poor Jewish kid in me telling this guy from the ghetto that he simply couldn't pass up a money opportunity like this. I was forcing my own values on him."

But while I file that under values that I doubt ever got forced, Slusher brings his point home. "I should be, in a general soap opera format, a hero. I mean that. I stand up for the worker against the underdog. The Players Association? Don't make me laugh. What you have here is a collective bargaining agreement in which owners and union need each other. The owners were going broke, the union had only 200 members. Garvey needed dues payers, the owners needed peace. So now they're sweethearts. This is traditionally what happens in the labor movement in this country—players' interests become subordinate to the union interests. Then there's the press—they're club-oriented. I'm not saying the press is bought by liquor and sandwiches and free rides; it's just that they remain friends with the owners while the players come and go. And finally the fans—if they only knew what the Sullivans *stood* for. Hell, John Hannah did pretty much what they've all wanted to do—tell the boss to go screw himself.

"You know," he sighs, polishing off his grapefruit juice, "the sad thing is that our country has a history of coming out for the country boy from Alabama. But in this instance the fans are supporting the brass. I don't get it. The Howard Slushers and the Jerry Kapsteins are the black hats and the Rosenblooms and Modells are the heroes. It's *incredible*. . . ."

Yes, in a way, it is incredible; yet Slusher himself strikes me as something less than a candidate for the remake of *Mr. Smith Goes to Washington*. But heed one last comment by Slusher on Slusher. "I remind myself of that line in Steinbeck's *Of Mice and Men*. The one where the guy says, 'There isn't any good or bad; there's only things people do.'" He reminds me of that principle too. In the end, it's pointless to assess Slusher as a force for good or evil; he is, in the best Tolstoy-Toynbee tradition, an inevitable product of his time.

For monstrous forces are howling about the videoscape of American sport, and when ignorant armies collide in the night, there must appear in the mist the shrewd, scurrying figure who, for a price, will negotiate terms for the mercenaries, and point the way to the tent of the vanquished chieftain, and manipulate the exchange of prisoners at battle's end.

"See?" says Howard Slusher, lighting up. "How's this with the big cigar? Don't I look like the classic agent?"

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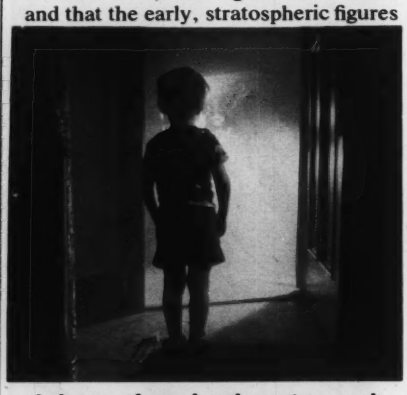
Movies/By Richard Corliss

An Encounter of the Best Kind

One advantage to being a movie reviewer is that, when you first see a new movie at a press screening, you haven't read the reviews. You can see the picture fresh, without expecting it to be either a revelation (in which case you come out saying, "Aaaah, it wasn't *that* good") or a bomb (in which case you say, "Gee, it wasn't *that* bad"). More important, you haven't had the movie pre-filtered and freeze-dried through every kind of analysis and opinion; so you're open to the thousand surprises of plot and performance—and those vagrant "privileged moments" (François Truffaut's phrase)—that movies, good and bad, can offer us. Sure, a critic in this hype-happy business needs a built-in flack detector and "the carapace of an armadillo" (Spiro Agnew's phrase), but he's certainly got it easier than the average moviegoer, who's simply looking for some indication of a film's subject, stars and quality, and not for the autopsy on a patient who may still be alive and well at the local Bijou.

If, at this point, any earthling is able to see **Close Encounters of the Third Kind** in this ideal Edenic state, it's because he's been a captive in the movie's alien spaceship for the past few months. (Oops, I just gave something away.) Author-director Steven Spielberg shot the film with trappings of secrecy worthy of the Manhattan Project, for two very good art-industry reasons: because he wanted his cast, his crew and himself to concentrate totally on making the picture, and because he wanted to protect Columbia Pictures' investment (the cost was something like $20 million) from the TV-movie ripoff specialists. So what happens? *New York* magazine sends its financial scribe, William Flanagan, down to Dallas to report on the movie—rather like sending Rex Reed to audit the Bert Lance case—and he not only pans the movie, he parses the plot. Results: Columbia's stock plummets, and those of us without steely self-control read all about the movie.

Mammon is not our concern here. Anyway, Columbia's stock soon rose again; and Danny Sheridan, the Cumaean Sybil of pigskin point-spreads, has ventured into movie handicapping with the prediction that "*Close Encounters of the Third Kind* will outgross *Star Wars*." I won't join in the entrail readings—in part because I'd like to forget my own prognostications, in the pages of *New Times*, that *Gable and Lombard* (one of the major box-office bowwows of 1976) would gross $50 million, and that the early, stratospheric figures



A drama of good and greater good: "A little child shall lead them"

for *Star Wars* wouldn't hold up. But I'd also like to forget for a moment that *Close Encounters* is an expensive piece of merchandise, like the Concorde, on which the economic fate of nations may depend. It is also a movie. A pretty terrific movie.

Paul Schrader, the screenwriter of *Taxi Driver*, told me a couple of years ago that he had discussed with Spielberg the possibility of writing the *Close Encounters* script—but that they disagreed on the direction the film should take. A UFO is sighted; contact is made; now what? Schrader thought the movie's protagonist should be a modern-day Saul of Tarsus, converted in a blinding flash into the true believer St. Paul, and that the film should be a science-fiction life of a 20th-century saint. Spielberg (according to Schrader) wanted to introduce a government conspiracy to cover up the news of an invasion: Star Child Meets Watergate.

As it turns out, both plot devices are used, but with the emphasis on the former. Roy Neary (Richard Dreyfuss), a power repairman, is searching one night for the source of an electrical failure when "suddenly there shined round about him a light from heaven; And he fell to the earth . . . And he trembling and astonished said, Lord, what wilt thou have me do? And the Lord said unto him, Arise, and go into the city, and it shall be told thee what thou must do . . . And Saul arose from the earth; and when his eyes were opened, he saw no man . . . And he was three days without sight, and neither did eat nor drink" (Acts, ix:3-9).

Now we're not saying that this repairman is a Roman centurion like Saul, or that a pickup truck is a horse, or that Muncie, Indiana, is on the road to Damascus, or that Neary's inexplicable sunburn is akin to blindness, or that his loss of appetite is a sign of anything more beatific than the hot flash of discovery. Nor do the beings in the spaceship hovering over Neary speak the English of the King James version of the Bible—in fact, no words at all are spoken in this early, eerie scene. You needn't take this "close encounter" as a Pauline conversion to understand that Neary has seen, felt, experienced something special, and that Spielberg wants us to experience its special power with Neary—to be not frightened (or rather, not *just* frightened: the scene is terrifyingly effective) but exalted by the possibilities suggested by the encounter. So Neary spends the rest of the film moving toward, rather than away from, the source of this otherworldly power. And we're meant to approach this unknowable inevitable force as Neary does: not in adolescent fear and trembling, but with childlike wonder.

Another Biblical quote: "And a little child shall lead them." If Neary is the audience's surrogate on this uncharted journey, the audience's ideal is four-year-old Barry Guiler (Cary Guffey), who senses the aliens' wish that he come with them, and follows his senses. This is early in the film, when we're not sure just what these unseen but all-powerful creatures are up to; so we sympathize with the heroic attempts of Barry's mother (Melinda Dillon) to "save" him and herself from their magnetic attraction—in a sequence that's as perfectly realized an exercise in the manipulation of a moviegoer's anxieties as anything in Spielberg's last film, *Jaws*. These beings, we're sure, have the power to cloud men's minds. Yes, but—and this is to the film's point—not the hearts and

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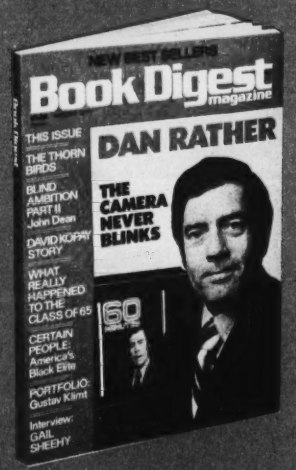

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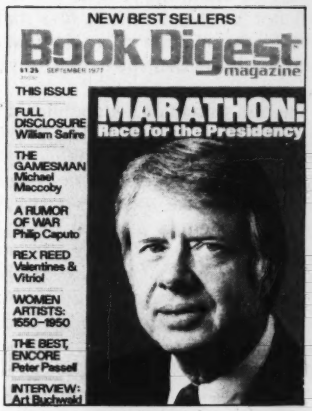

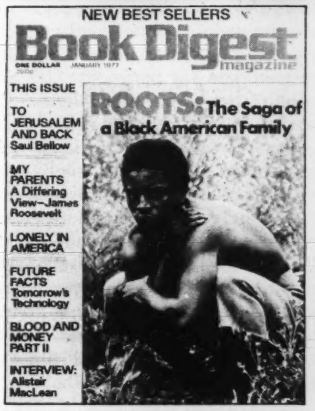
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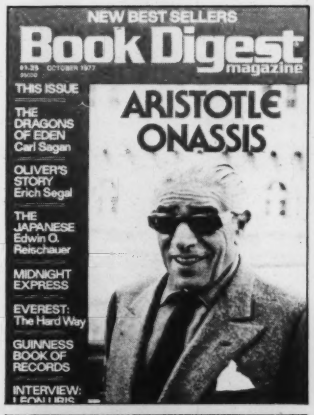

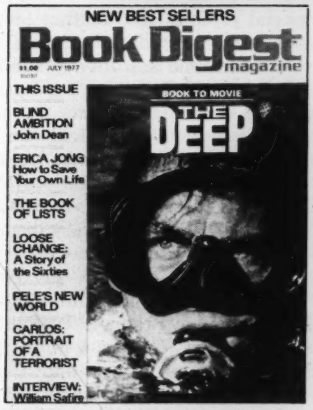

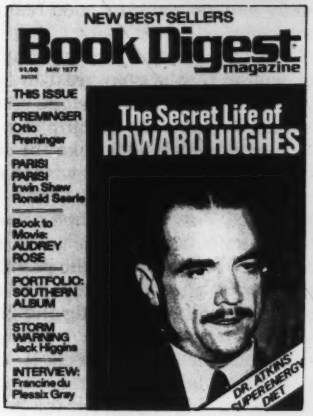
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"HEADS." BRAND NEW, ON COLUMBIA/TAPPAN ZEE RECORDS AND TAPES.

minds of children. A little boy's trust will not be misplaced. A film that begins in the manner of a cinematic de Sade ends in the spirit of a mystical Disney.

Though touted as a stepchild of *2001* and *Star Wars*, Spielberg's movie is really closer to the SF films of the fifties—like *Invaders from Mars*, in which a nine-year-old boy spots a flying saucer landing in a wheat field, or *It Came from Outer Space*, in which tweedy Richard Carlson connives in the escape from earth of some amiable, amorphous aliens who landed in Arizona by mistake. And Neary fits snugly into the mold of the fifties SF hero, whom I sketched last year in a *New Times* piece on the genre: an "electrical engineer" whose hallmarks are "curiosity and humanism . . . Is often mistaken for paranoid. Has an unerring instinct for telling whether aliens are friendly or hostile. His scientific prowess is validated by being able to meet the aliens head-on; his humanism is validated by winning the heart of his leading lady." As played by Richard Dreyfuss, Neary is Richard Carlson updated to the on-edge, flipped-out, grab-it-by-the-balls seventies. And as directed by Spielberg, the character and the movie have a suburb-slick sense of humor the old SF films sadly lacked.

So, although the film's hardware (especially the aliens' mother ship) is spectacularly rendered, and fully justifies the time and money spent on it, the special effects are only part of the film's very special effect. It's more important that we're left with the feeling of potential human value radiated by the movie. For *Close Encounters* is a film with *no* bad guys, terrestrial or otherwise—from the military men who deny knowledge of the encounter (to prevent chaos) to the mysterious Frenchman in charge of investigating UFOs (played by François Truffaut as a kind of Jacques Cousteau of the wide open spaces) to Neary and Barry's mother. Everybody in this movie is so bloody *benign*—and the good feeling is contagious.

This all may sound pretty goopy, but I'm willing to place *my* trust in Spielberg—a Super Technician (and natural-born moviemaker) in the grip of a simple, overwhelming idea, like the scientists in the film, who have wished upon a star and got what they wanted for Christmas. This is a triumph of an extraordinary kind: a drama not of good and evil, but of good and the possibility for greater good, of the search for knowledge and the fulfilling end of that search. Inhabiting the traditional science-fiction tense of what-if, *Close Encounters* takes us on a stranger, more rewarding trip: from the present conditional to the future perfect.

Music/By Patrick Carr

Something New: Talking Heads

At CBGB's, Talking Heads are pounding the night away. Two of them—the singer and the woman bass player—are the center of attention, and they look like startled raccoons. Their faces are distracted, surprised, intense, serious. They dress like conservative preppies, traditional American Casual complemented by the short hair of the day; they look as if they are in this home of punk by accident. The singer is pinned to his mike, eyes riveted on the ceiling; the bass player, boyish and skinny, watches him intently; both of them are jerking, trembling to the rhythm.

The music is strange and very compelling, rock-hard rhythm flashing spasmodically over an odd range of rock/pop, skipping from Zappa to Motown and back and pasted with vocals that sound like a methedrined Tiny Tim gone suddenly serious; the changes are unexpected, Zappa-jazzy and somehow very right. This is great music. It has bottom, tension, texture, drama and intelligence—and it rocks.

But why this sense of unfamiliarity? Why this shock hardly felt since—Jesus, when? The first blast of Elvis, Otis Redding, the Who, the Dead, the Velvet Underground, Dylan, reggae? When did somebody last do something both new and great to rock and roll? For a decade now, the rock/pop music payoff has been found in the perfect execution, with spirit and embellishments, of what I know by heart. Even the punk bands are mining the fifties and sixties motherlode —doing it with infinitely greater energy than the current top-pop hierarchy of sensitivity salesmen, mellowed old warriors and mayonnaise queens—but here, in the very heart of New Wavedom, is something else. It feels like a *new* layer. Chuck Berry didn't invent this.

So far the music alone has done this to me, but now I catch the lyrics. What's this? The singer lives in a building, likes the building, thinks everybody needs a building? His friends can come and see him in his building, he's very busy but he always has time for his friends. Then the singer slowly turns into the President of the United States, the building into the White House. He looks out over the great states of this Union and sees the laws passed in Washington. He likes some laws, not others; some are his favorites . . .

What? No Chelsea Drugstore, no feel like I'm dyin', no come back baby, come back, no *stick it to me*? Where is the rock and roll character? Rock and roll has bred its own code and language, so that in many ways a singer or writer *automatically* assumes another persona before he/she sings or writes. The persona has the sex power of early Elvis, the communal vibe of the Beatles, the poetic license of Dylan, the rebelliousness of them all; this combined identity (often glorious and always down) stands with rockers when they perform or record, throwing a cloak over their real selves. They don't sing like they talk, they don't think like they write; as Keith Richard said, when you're in rock and roll you become the home for a mythical character in search of a body to play it. You strike the poses and make the gestures—*git* down!—and that's how you establish common ground between yourself and your audience. The ritual is appealing, communally and individually reinforcing, and so much a part of the rock experience that nobody questions it anymore; that's the way it is.

But here, now, is this person, David Byrne, and he carries none of that baggage. He plays a guitar, is surrounded by his comrades and his equipment, and shakes with the best of them, but he does not pose. The songs he writes and sings sound like daydreams. They do not rhyme. They duplicate the thought and language patterns of a modern, intelligent American satisfying (sometimes merely stating) his curiosity. They are very personal in origin and very odd in subject matter, but this is normal to all of us. We are complex creatures, and the hard, simple events, poetic whimsies and lurid fantasies of everyday rock lyrics neither tell us anything we don't already know nor truly reflect the level of our complications or curiosity. We listen, but the messages merely reaffirm the basics, and as we get older, so do they. It is in rectifying this situation while also being an exciting, physical rock and roll band that Talking Heads have made a major breakthrough.

I sit here, shocked, staring at this little bunch of honest people, and wonder how on earth it came to be.

Several days later, I am leaving their building, in an industrial section of Queens, with some answers.

There is the building itself, for instance. Matte red all over, it looks like the superstructure of some mashed-up old harbor tug, railings a-rusting; the interior lists at various angles and is large, loose and full of plumbing. It has the cluttered stamp of a place used by minds too busy to bother with nonessentials.

Then there are the people. Chris Frantz (drums) and his wife Tina Weymouth (bass) live there, and the others come by to rehearse, have

ORIGINAL PHOTOGRAPH BY WENDI LOMBARDI

Talking Heads: No Chelsea Drugstore, no feel like dyin'

I just can't seem to get a job...

that's because I am only 9 years old.

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meetings, etc. Sitting around their kitchen table and telling the story of the band's two-year New York history, they seem just as serious as they appear to be onstage. Specifically, it turns out that Chris (so languid, with the tones of a Harvard man in Government) is the son of a career Cavalry (paratrooper) officer turned military lawyer, that David's father is a communications engineer for Westinghouse ("lots of defense work and that sort of thing"), that Jerry (the guitar/keyboard player) is a Harvard man despite his rock and roll looks, and that Tina is the daughter of *Admiral* Weymouth. They met at the Rhode Island School of Design, which is sort of like meeting at the Savoy.

They are, in short, both artists and intellectuals. They could be holding very good jobs or being charming at garden parties, but they are artists who have chosen music (over the visual arts) as their means of self-expression. They are all in their mid-twenties and they are very responsible. Self-disciplined and rigorous in their work, they are obviously the inheritors of stern and righteous values.

This trait is in all of them, but it is most vivid in Tina. Tina sat at the table and talked without prompting for an hour and a half, hunting down her feelings and positions with an almost compulsive honesty. When she began talking, at the age of three, it was in complete sentences and paragraphs—no baby talk for her. At age twelve, she had an emotional/intellectual crisis over the issue of whether art could be both spontaneous and calculating. As she explained the process by which David taught her how to play the bass after she joined the band, and the unusually democratic way David's songs are turned into complete performances, and the real love which exists between the individual Heads, she kept her hands busy by winding a thick rubber band around her fingers until they bled. "I guess we'll all be proud of ourselves when we're very old if we can say that what we did was honest, and we tried to maintain an integrity," she said.

Walking away from their nest, then, I think of Talking Heads as both a natural challenge to the old notion that rock and roll is the philosophical property of the dispossessed and as the setters of a new standard for intelligent musicians and lyricists. Then I think of them as the U.S. Cavalry chasing the sunset through a party of stylish, different and slightly egocentric Indians. The Heads don't even see the Indians—they're chasing the sunset—and the Indians just watch them go by and wonder *what's the hurry?* The Heads will surely go on chasing, but whether the Indians will ever know what they were after is another question entirely.

Records

By Jim Miller

"Heroes," *David Bowie* (RCA); **I Remember Yesterday,** *Donna Summer* (Casablanca); **Trans-Europe Express,** *Kraftwerk* (Capitol). Rock and roll has always contained two modes of communication: one personal, passionate and committed; the other impersonal, contrived and detached. In this decade, "ready-made" rock has become a prevalent form of esoteric as well as commercial music-making: genres and idioms triumph over self-expression, and even innovators value abstract structure over emotion.

Kraftwerk, who profess to be "sound engineers" rather than musicians, are pacesetters for recent machine rock. By synthesizing the electronic minimalism of Philip Glass and Terry Riley with the rhythmic conventions of rock, they have forged a weird hybrid, fit for an Alain Robbe-Grillet soundtrack—purely technological pop, complete with pre-tooled pins and sparkplugs fully exposed and proudly polished. On tracks like "Showroom Dummies," Kraftwerk encapsulates an entire aesthetic: the glamour of passing fashion is frozen in the measured pulse

PHOTOGRAPH BY GARY MERRIN/GLOBE PHOTOS

Bowie: A calculated cipher

of humming computers. It is uncanny. The crowd dances on command. The perfect music for mannequins, "Dummies," like the dance hit "Trans-Europe Express," penetrates to the essence of current disco.

It is no wonder, then, that disco diva Donna Summer should draw inspiration from Kraftwerk, nor is it so surprising that "I Feel Love," the first purely synthetic single designed for the disco trade, should apotheosize a genre that has left the living behind in studio B, overdubbing vocals to keep the rhythm machine running on time. On *I Remember Yesterday*, Summer and her producers also re-create the sixties as R2D2 might have experienced them: this evocation of nostalgia as punch-card recall parodies as well as panders to the peculiar paralysis of spirit that has made so much current rock into idle entertainment.

Leave it to David Bowie to explore intentionally all of these tensions. From his early exploits with art-rock and his emulation of Anthony Newley as theatrical paradigm, to his recent adventures with disco and the exhibition of Brian Eno as technological paramour, Bowie has systematically—and coldly—mined the realm of gesture and symbol, as if to refine rock as a system of signifiers without anything signified, a clockwork code requiring no creative intervention once set in motion. A calculated cipher, the "star" presents a plastic mask that invites as well as defies unriddling.

From "Changes" on, Bowie has been the poet of protean man, producing musical modules to decorate a deracinated culture. On "*Heroes*," he has outdone himself. With Eno and guitarist Robert Fripp, Bowie has crafted a compelling monument to machine rock that is as tough and bleak as its ironic title implies: "We're nothing/ And nothing will help us." Side one explores various modes of vocal expression, all of which portend, either musically or lyrically, a catatonic catastrophe—a promise fulfilled on side two, which consists of electronically "treated" instrumentals (Antonin Artaud, meet Kraftwerk: may the best mime win).

A disciplined triumph of form over will, delivered with an unsettling dose of autistic burlesque, Bowie's "*Heroes*" represents one kind of pinnacle for rock in the seventies. And much as I dislike the solipsistic reality his latest pose points to, I suspect that David Bowie *matters* much more today than, say, the Rolling Stones. Like the punks, who reassert rock as personal passion, David Bowie simultaneously connects with, re-creates and confronts our times—and that is something the greatest rock and roll has always aspired to.

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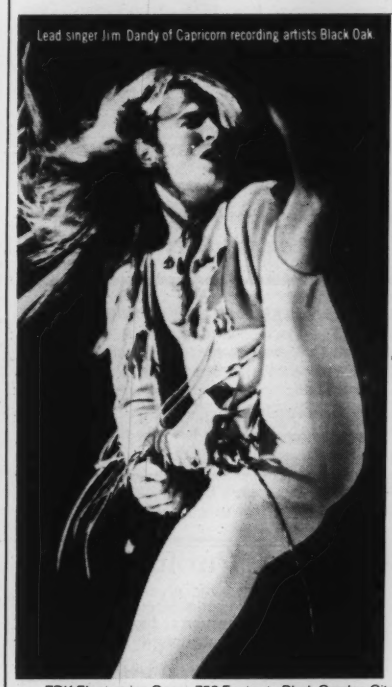

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Books/By Geoffrey Wolff

Kosinski's Killing Ground

Blind Date *by Jerzy Kosinski.* Houghton Mifflin (236 pp., $8.95).

Other critics agree: sooner or later we are asked by new acquaintances what we think of Jerzy Kosinski. The question, usually touching the man as well as his bleak and cruel novels, is something of a test; but it differs from the judgments that readers exchange with critics about Mailer or Pynchon or Bellow or Gass. The talk about these latter writers tends toward the headlong, toward reckless combat or commity. In the case of Kosinsky the question is bleak, anxious; it is asked with the breath held. Kosinski's fictions are brutal, and cold. They inspire curiosity about their author's motives, even his character, and critics do not customarily license themselves to discuss these matters. His novels disturb not only because of their extreme situations but because for readers (who can and should license themselves to discuss a writer's motives) they stand or fall according to how deeply felt they seem.

With the notable exception of *Being There* (1971), all of Kosinski's six novels may be said to concern themselves with two connected sets of polarities: liberty as it wars with stricture, and cruelty as it provokes revenge. Kosinski's stories are invariably episodic and invariably minimal: his characters bring with them into the transient habitations of his plots only the lightest baggage of history and motivation. To have read any one of his novels—*The Painted Bird* (1965 and 1976), *Steps* (1968), *Being There*, *The Devil Tree* (1973), *Cockpit* (1975) or *Blind Date*—is to be able to recognize within a paragraph or two any other as the work of the same man.

The language has a flat, almost casual character, like the radio voice you might hear droning in the background while a plainclothes policeman passionlessly beats you to death. The sentences are short and businesslike. Until *Cockpit* they had an almost poetic compression, a kind of diverting beauty that perhaps ameliorated the effect of rapes and gang-rapes and torture and assassination and bestiality and poisonings and stabbings and shootings and incest and whatevers. The last two novels have aimed for an unremitting plainness, or clarity.

BETTMANN ARCHIVE & SCIENTIA / COLLAGE BY RICHARD BECKER

The boldest feature of Kosinski's signature is plot. His stories twist and turn, and his characters get caught in their webs. Plot here is entirely organic to Kosinski's deepest purposes, for his fictions are about disguises, manipulations, strategems and confidence games, circumstantial complications such as a god might invent. Just as coincidence is the narrative obstacle that plot labors to overcome, so is blind chance the enemy of Kosinski's current man of masks, George Levanter.

Levanter, an investor, is asked by a character from whom he had extorted money what he does. "I do as I please," Levanter replies. The boy in *The Painted Bird* is the prisoner of his circumstances, as helpless as a fly in a bottle. So too is the hero of *Being There*, a victim of the passive voice (his name is Chance). With these two exceptions, Kosinski has devoted his singular gifts to an exploration of the devices, if not the consequences, of Levanter's declaration: "I do as I please."

This includes, in the present work, raping (the "blind date" of the title) a girl camper, murdering an Eastern European spy and informer by shoving a saber up his rectum, blowing up the minister of a dictatorship on a ski lift, any number of episodes of blackmail and treachery and, most important, a successful war against fate. Levanter displays his own fugitive appetites as he muses, while raping a young girl, "If she were a thing . . . one day [I] could own her."

This shocks, but not in the ravaging manner of *The Painted Bird* in which Kosinski's voice was previously unheard, and the object of its icy narrative manner was a fragile boy, and the arena where bestialities were enacted was war-time Poland: a moral desert within sight of the exhaust stacks of the crematoria. The shocking coolness of *Blind Date* belongs to what followed *The Painted Bird*, to the escalating savagery, seemingly rootless, that marks (and some critics have thought defaces) *Steps*. I felt *Steps* like a blow when I first read it; I was astounded by its clarity and verbal grace; I was troubled, even angered, by the monstrousness of its episodes of rape, mutilation, incest, et cetera, et cetera, et cetera. I had never before thought of a book as immoral, but *Steps* made a kind of personal history for me. What troubled me the most, I guess, ten years back, was that a cherished conviction (the author's motives and feelings are irrelevant to a judgment of his particular work) had come bang up against an experience. As I read *Steps* it mattered a great deal to me whether or not its cruelties were felt or "merely" (there's the intrusive judgment) gratuitous.

In a pamphlet distributed to his critics and friends after *Steps* won the National Book Award, Kosinski attempted to amplify his preoccupations: "If sin is any act which prevents the self from functioning freely, the greatest sources of sin are those formerly protective agencies like society and religion." In Kosinski's instance, and the

cases of Tarden (the hero of *Cockpit*, a spy) and Levanter, "society" is the tyranny in Poland or elsewhere in the Soviet bloc, and "religion" is anything that demands or invites "blind" adherence, whether it be fate or Marxism.

Kosinski continues with this inquiry: "The original sense of 'creative' becomes completely reversed; now the only possible creative act, the independent act of choice and self-enhancement, seems to be the destructive act—as in Sade." Invoking Dostoevsky's Raskolnikov and the inversions of Genet (sainted by Sartre), Kosinski declares that "perversion, defined as any act or practice or viewpoint which subverts procreation in the physical sense, is esteemed as [a] gesture of freedom, in that it negates the creative-procreative impulse . . . . When one can accept the unchanging definitive statement [by Camus' Caligula] 'men die and they are not happy,' the indifference of the universe is inescapable."

So there's the fundamental provocation for Kosinski's fixation on cool customers who change lives and take them, as they will. Revenge. It would be a mistake to read *Steps*, and what follows *Steps*, as a serial punishment to avenge what was done to the boy in *The Painted Bird*. In an afterword to that first novel, Kosinski warned that the boy's appetite for revenge ceased to be directed at any single person or group, that hatred and revenge had "become attitudes, deeply ingrained, the wellspring of the purpose of his life, the basis for his behavior *in all situations*."

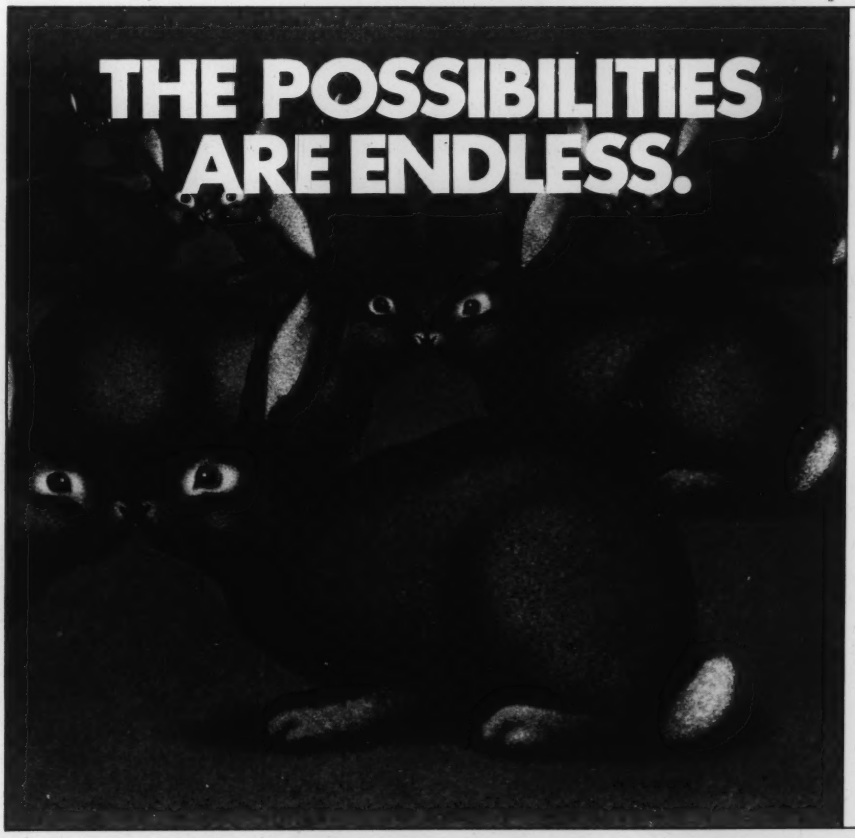
Levanter has a sundial in his backyard in Beverly Hills, one of the places to which he wanders on his vaguely motivated missions. The sun-dial is inscribed with a sentiment, a bleak assertion: "EVERY HOUR WOUNDS, THE LAST KILLS." The cool manner of his author's voice as his (let's leave the antecedent confused) plots unwind masks rage at the universe. Nothing is spared: natural law, genetic destiny (an episode with a plastic surgeon affords Levanter opportunity to gloat at "the defeat of blind nature by rational man"), sexual urgency and the humiliations and casual salvations imposed on man by blind, uncaring chance.

Like Kosinski, Levanter was spared death with Sharon Tate and her guests by a providential mistake by a baggage clerk in Paris. Some would by such chance discover themselves chosen, even blessed. Levanter is reminded of his captivity in hostile territory, the cosmos. Even when his curiosity is aroused, this is expressed in the locutions of stricture: "Levanter was captivated." His headlights, as he drives, do not seek out, they "ferret out" sleepy villages.

The aggression is wearing. Punishment and revenge—as we learned from the Eumenides, Aeschylus' one-time furies translated into healers—can go past ripeness, go high. In the remorseless war of Kosinski's characters against their circumstances the stakes must in each episode be cranked higher, and beginning as he did with the monstrous episodes of *The Painted Bird* and the cool excesses of *Steps* his self-imposed obligation to turn the screw each time tighter has not been subject to realization.

Yeats said that rhetoric is the will doing the work of the imagination. As Kosinski stuffs our faces in the shit and gore, his anti-rhetoric becomes leaner and leaner, and his invention reaches further and further for curiosities and moral conundrums and simple abominations. And the effect, for me, becomes odder and odder, mondo weirdo, a sideshow of curiosities.

But mark: I would not for the world pass by a Kosinski sideshow without pausing to see the whole thing. Truly, nothing else is like it. And I know he means it, every word. You can tell. His fictions shine with a black light. They are obsessed, and the symptom of their obsession is control. So they feel perilous. And that is why, when people ask me what I think about Kosinski's work, and Kosinski, I think they hold their breath, and I know I hold mine.



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For whom the *belles-lettres* toll/By Geoffrey Wolff

Final Tribute

After ten years and twenty-six issues, *American Review* shut down this month for good. The common idiom for such events implies force (*investors took into their own hands the fate of the ailing publication*), or at the least regret (*staffers wept as they received the news at a champagne breakfast*). But nothing about *New American Review/American Review*—it lost its baby-fat modifier with the sixteenth issue—has been common. It has been the home of the most important and risk-taking prose published in any American periodical during its lifetime.

Philip Roth chose NAR/AR #1 to introduce a long segment of *Portnoy's Complaint*. The first word of Kate Millet's *Sexual Politics* came in the form of a long excerpt in issue #7. William H. Gass joined the party, John Barth, people you've never heard of. Doctorow's *Ragtime* first appeared in the tri-quarterly (and then twice-yearly), edited from the beginning by Theodore Solotaroff, a soft-voiced, shrewd, street-wise child of the 40s who took as his mission a dialogue between the formalist ruminations of the 50s (the Age of Criticism) and the exploratory acts of the 60s (the Age of Rue and Rancor).

Now Solotaroff believes he has done what he can, and it's time for another editor of another magazine to join the 60s to the 70s and 80s. He has known for about a year that he would bring his act to a close with issue #26, and said at the time he agreed with Edmund Wilson's judgment that the useful life of a serious magazine is about ten years. "You pretty much work out your ideas in that period," Solotaroff told a reporter, "and you also go through your emotions. After 25 issues, the magazine had become a kind of holding action, instead of pioneering. It would be healthier for new writing if someone else developed his vision as I did, ten years ago, when I was 35."

From the beginning, Solotaroff's motto seemed to be: *come off it!* Issue #1 showed on its cover a group of five men—standing on a street, or perhaps a college courtyard, talking with animation—probably arguing. They are city guys, for sure, disheveled, carrying things to read; three of them

The *Review* at midlife: a place where new ideas could congregate.

are bearded. It was Solotaroff's radical notion that he would afford a place where ideas and actions could congregate, that writers might with good effect take their imaginations to the streets, and bring back from the streets work that could distinguish itself on the page. NAR/AR has always been political, but never narrowly so. If it published Michael Herr's "Illumination Rounds" from Vietnam in 1969 it was to show something fundamental about the nature of men at war. If Eric Bentley wrote about the Columbia University troubles in the dying days of the 60s it was to make a larger point about the practical and political limits of humanism.

The impulse was always to think something through from the beginning in the pages of NAR/AR, to junk the conventional wisdom. But these revisions of givens were, by design, received by Solotaroff rather than commissioned by him. He boasts with pride and justice that NAR/AR was from the outset "a writer's magazine," that he'd let writers decide what was important to them, and if it seemed important to other people, if it seemed "new," he'd print it.

There's a catch here, and as usual Solotaroff is the one to point it out. Magazines such as his, aiming for a national rather than New York readership, and courting dramatic diversity, want for an identity and a loyal following. It is Solotaroff's hunch that readers "tend to use magazines to confirm their imagination of themselves" and that "there's not much to confirm about yourself in a magazine of new writing unless you're a new writer . . ."

There's another catch. As sales dropped from an early 100,000 per issue to a recent 50,000, NAR/AR became literally a writer's magazine instead of a reader's: for each issue, Solotaroff received a greater number of manuscript submissions than he sold magazines.

Despite the declining support of readers, the quality of NAR/AR has never slipped. The current issue has, by Eric Bentley, the best essay on the nature of homophobia, from the trial of Oscar Wilde on, I have ever encountered. And the previous issue introduced Robert Coover's remarkable *Public Burning*. In fact, Solotaroff was one of the principal editors of *Public Burning*, and it was his place in the catbird's seat of NAR/AR that brought him and the three publishers who have supported the magazine—New American Library (1967–70), Simon and Schuster (1970–72) and Bantam (since 1972)—privileged first looks at the best new prose writing around.

Solotaroff has always been obliged to serve whatever house has supported NAR/AR as a part-time editor. Now what began as an obligation has come to seem more like an opportunity, and he will work full-time as an editor at Bantam. But it's unlikely that anything anyone can do as a book editor will equal the contribution to new thinking and writing Solotaroff made as editor of his magazine. Ten years ago, reviewing issue #1, I wrote that "it will be remembered as a literary event of the first importance." I am usually the worst of prophets; for once, I believe, I was the best.●

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